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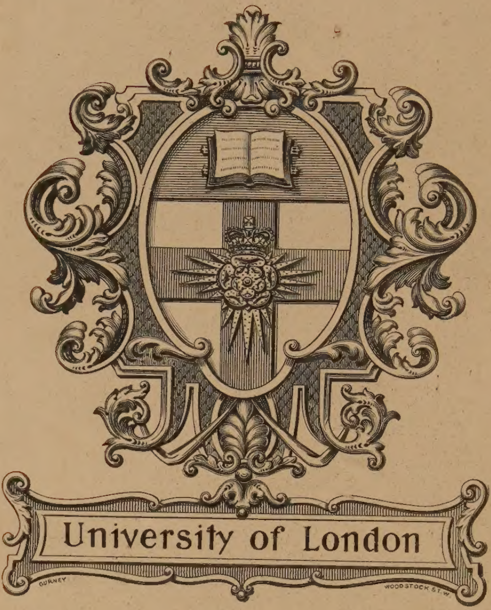
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

AUTHORISED EDITION.

FOURTH SERIES,

Commencing with the Third Session of the Twenty-sixth Parliament
of the
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

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60 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME XLV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE NINETEENTH DAY OF JANUARY
TO
THE EIGHTH DAY OF FEBRUARY
1897.

WATERLOW & SONS LIMITED,
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THE MINISTRY

OF THE

MOST HONOURABLE THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, K.G.,

AT THE OPENING OF THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,

AND THE FOURTEENTH OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA,

On JANUARY 19th, 1897.

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs	The Most Hon. the Marquess of Salisbury, K.G.
Lord High Chancellor	The Right Hon. Lord Halsbury.
Lord President of the Council	The Most Noble the Duke of Devonshire, K.G.
Lord Privy Seal	The Right Hon. Viscount Cross, G.C.B., G.C.S.I.
First Lord of the Treasury	The Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.
Secretary of State for the Home Department	The Right Hon. Sir Matthew White Ridley, Bart.
Secretary of State for the Colonies	The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain.
Secretary of State for War	The Most Hon. the Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G.
Secretary of State for India	The Right Hon. Lord George Francis Hamilton.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	The Right Hon Sir Michael E. Hicks Beach, Bart.
First Lord of the Admiralty	The Right Hon. George Joachim Goschen.
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	The Right Hon. Earl Cadogan, K.G.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland	The Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
President of the Board of Trade	The Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.
Secretary for Scotland and Vice President of the Scotch Education Department	The Right Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh.
President of the Local Government Board	The Right Hon. Henry Chaplin.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	The Right Hon. Lord James of Hereford.
First Commissioner of Works, Parks, and Buildings	The Right Hon. Aretas Akers-Douglas.
President of the Board of Agriculture	The Right Hon. Walter Hume Long.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	The Right. Hon. Gerald William Balfour.
Postmaster General	The Most Noble the Duke of Norfolk, K.G.
Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education	The Right Hon. Sir John Eldon Gorst.
Lords Commissioners of the Treasury	Henry Torrens Anstruther, Esq. William Hayes Fisher, Esq. The Lord Stanley.
Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty	Admiral Sir Frederick William Richards, G.C.B. Rear Admiral Sir Frederick George Denham Bedford, K.C.B. Rear Admiral Sir John Arbuthnot Fisher, K.C.B. Rear Admiral Gerard Henry Uctred Noel, R.N. Joseph Austen Chamberlain, Esq.
Patronage Secretary to the Treasury	Sir William Hood Walrond, Bart.
Financial Secretary to the Treasury	The Right Hon. Robert William Hanbury.
Secretary to the Admiralty	William Grey Ellison Macartney, Esq.
Secretary to the Board of Trade	The Earl of Dudley.
Secretary to the Local Government Board	Thomas Wallace Russell, Esq.
Under Secretary for the Home Department	The Right Hon. Jesse Collings.
Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs	The Right Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon.
Under Secretary for the Colonies	The Earl of Selborne.
Under Secretary for War	The Right Hon. William St. John Fremantle Brodrick.
Under Secretary for India	The Earl of Onslow, G.C.M.G.
Paymaster General	The Earl of Hopetoun, G.C.M.G.
Financial Secretary to the War Department	Joseph Powell-Williams, Esq.
Parliamentary Charity Commissioner	John Grant Lawson, Esq.
Judge Advocate General	The Right Hon. Sir Francis H. Jeune, Knt.
Attorney General	Sir Richard Everard Webster, Knt.
Solicitor General	Sir Robert Bannatyne Finlay, Knt.

MINISTRY OF THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY.

SCOTLAND.

Secretary for Scotland	In the Cabinet. *(See previous page.)*
Lord Advocate	The Right Hon. Andrew Graham Murray.
Solicitor General	Charles Scott Dickson, Esq.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant and Lord Chancellor	In the Cabinet. *(See previous page.)*
Attorney General	The Right Hon. John Atkinson.
Solicitor General	William Kenny, Esq.

THE QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD.

Lord Steward of the Household	The Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, G.C.B.
Lord Chamberlain of the Household	The Right Hon. the Earl of Lathom, G.C.B.
Master of the Horse	The Most Noble the Duke of Portland.
Treasurer of the Household	The Viscount Curzon.
Comptroller of the Household	The Right Hon. Lord Arthur William Hill.
Master of the Household	The Lord Edward William Pelham Clinton, K.C.B.
Vice Chamberlain of the Household	The Hon. Ailwyn Edward Fellowes.
Captain of the Yeoman of the Guard	The Earl Waldegrave.
Captain of the Corps of Gentleman-at-Arms	The Lord Belper.
Master of the Buckhounds	The Right Hon. the Earl of Coventry.
Lords-in-Waiting	The Earl of Clarendon. The Earl of Ranfurly. The Earl of Kintore, G.C.M.G. The Viscount Bridport, G.C.B. The Lord Churchill. The Lord Harris, G.C.I.E. The Lord Lawrence. The Lord Bagot.
Mistress of the Robes	Her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch

AN ALPHABETICAL LIST

OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN

THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

(Presented at the Opening of the Session.)

NOTE.—*The Figures in the Margin refer to the corresponding Figures on the Roll.*

A.

39 Abercorn, James, Marquess of. (*Duke of Abercorn.*)
345 Abercromby, George Ralph, Lord.
471 Aberdare, Henry Campbell, Lord.
52 Abergavenny, William, Marquess of.
76 Abingdon, Montagu Arthur, Earl of.
394 Abinger, James Yorke MacGregor, Lord.
463 Acton, John Emerich Edward, Lord.
546 Addington, Egerton, Lord.
47 Ailesbury, Henry Augustus, Marquess of.
49 Ailsa, Archibald, Marquess of.
87 Airlie, David Stanley William, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
5 Albany, His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert, Duke of.
78 Albemarle, Arnold Allan Cecil, Earl of.
585 Aldenham, Henry Hucks, Lord.
482 Alington, Henry Gerard, Lord.
159 Amherst, William Archer, Earl.
562 Amherst of Hackney, William Amhurst, Lord
496 Ampthill, Arthur Oliver Villiers, Lord.
195 Ancaster, Gilbert Henry, Earl of.
45 Anglesey, Henry, Marquess of.
441 Annaly, Luke, Lord.
125 Annesley, Hugh, Earl. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
491 Ardilaun, Arthur Edward, Lord.
33 Argyll, George Douglas, Duke of.
542 Armstrong, William George, Lord.
275 Arundell of Wardour, John Francis, Lord.
518 Ashbourne, Edward, Lord.
100 Ashburnham, Bertram, Earl of.
396 Ashburton, Francis Denzil Edward, Lord.
559 Ashcombe, George, Lord.

579 Ashton, James, Lord.
320 Auckland, William Morton, Lord.
94 Aylesford, Charles Wightwick, Earl of.

B.

303 Bagot, William, Lord.
288 Balfour of Burleigh, Alexander Hugh, Lord. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
459 Balinhard, James, Lord. (*Earl of Southesk.*)
128 Bandon, James Francis, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
250 Bangor, Daniel Lewis, Bishop of.
207 Bangor, Henry William Crosbie, Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
283 Barnard, Henry de Vere, Lord.
543 Basing, George Limbrey, Lord.
402 Bateman, William Bateman, Lord.
38 Bath, Thomas Henry, Marquess of.
112 Bathurst, Seymour Henry, Earl.
567 Battersea, Cyril, Lord.
152 Beauchamp, William, Earl.
16 Beaufort, Henry Charles Fitzroy, Duke of.
19 Bedford, Herbrand Arthur, Duke of
127 Belmore, Somerset Richard, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
427 Belper, Henry, Lord.
75 Berkeley, Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of.
309 Berwick, Richard Henry, Lord.
560 Blythswood, Archibald Campbell, Lord.
200 Bolingbroke and St. John, Henry, Viscount.
328 Bolton, William Thomas, Lord.
295 Boston, George Florance, Lord.
263 Botreaux, Charles Edward Hastings, Lord. (*Earl of Loudoun.*)
538 Bowes, Claude, Lord. (*Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne.*)
290 Boyle, Richard Edmund St. Lawrence, Lord. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery.*)
495 Brabourne, Edward, Lord.
151 Bradford, Orlando George Charles, Earl of.
449 Brancepeth, Gustavus Russell, Lord. (*Viscount Boyne.*)
23 Brandon, Alfred Douglas, Duke of.
534 Brassey, Thomas, Lord.
316 Braybrooke, Charles Cornwallis, Lord.
268 Braye, Alfred Thomas Townshend, Lord.
53 Breadalbane, Gavin, Marquess of.
223 Bridport, Alexander Nelson, Viscount.
48 Bristol, Frederick William John, Marquess of.
325 Brodrick, William, Lord. (*Viscount Midleton.*)
103 Brooke, Francis Richard Charles Guy, Earl, and Earl of Warwick.
437 Brougham and Vaux, Henry Charles, Lord.
148 Brownlow, Adelbert Wellington Brownlow, Earl.
104 Buckinghamshire, Sidney Carr, Earl of.
580 Burghclere, Herbert Coulstoun, Lord.
532 Burton, Michael Arthur, Lord.
41 Bute, John Patrick, Marquess of.
280 Byron, George Frederick William, Lord.

C.

120 Cadogan, George Henry, Earl.
186 Cairns, Herbert John, Earl.
129 Caledon, James, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
326 Calthorpe, Augustus Cholmondeley, Lord.
6 Cambridge, His Royal Highness George William Frederick Charles, Duke of.
44 Camden, John Charles, Marquess.
264 Camoys, Francis Robert, Lord.

162 Camperdown, Robert Adam Philips Haldane, Earl of.

7 Canterbury, Frederick, Archbishop of.

218 Canterbury, Henry Charles, Viscount.

406 Carew, Robert Shapland George Julian, Lord.

312 Carleton, Richard Henry, Lord. (*Earl of Shannon.*)

475 Carlingford, Chichester Samuel, Lord. (*Lord Clermont.*)

72 Carlisle, George James, Earl of.

255 Carlisle, John Wareing, Bishop of.

119 Carnarvon, George Edward Stanhope Molyneux, Earl of.

88 Carnwath, Robert Harris Carnwath, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

196 Carrington, Charles Robert, Earl.

344 Carysfort, William, Lord. (*Earl of Carysfort.*)

462 Castletown, Bernard Edward Barnaby, Lord.

146 Cathcart, Alan Frederick, Earl.

160 Cawdor, John Frederick Vaughan, Earl.

386 Chaworth, Reginald, Lord. (*Earl of Meath.*)

431 Chelmsford, Frederic Augustus, Lord.

430 Chesham, Charles Compton William, Lord.

248 Chester, Francis John, Bishop of.

69 Chesterfield, Edwyn Francis, Earl of.

549 Cheylesmore, William Meriton, Lord.

237 Chichester, Ernest Roland, Bishop of.

134 Chichester, Walter John, Earl of.

46 Cholmondeley, George Henry Hugh, Marquess of.

358 Churchill, Victor Albert Francis Charles, Lord.

432 Churston, John, Lord.

365 Clanbrassill, John Strange, Lord. (*Earl of Roden.*)

216 Clancarty, William Frederick, Viscount. (*Earl of Clancarty.*)

379 Clanwilliam, Richard James, Lord. (*Earl of Clanwilliam.*)

114 Clarendon, Edward Hyde, Earl of.

342 Clarina, Eyre Challoner Henry, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

384 Clements, Charles, Lord. (*Earl of Leitrim.*)

281 Clifford of Chudleigh, Lewis Henry Hugh, Lord.

276 Clifton, Edward Henry Stuart, Lord. (*Earl of Darnley.*)

260 Clinton, Charles Henry Rolle, Lord.

336 Clonbrock, Luke Gerald, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

391 Cloncurry, Valentine Frederick, Lord.

201 Cobham, Charles George, Viscount.

360 Colchester, Reginald Charles Edward, Lord.

473 Coleridge, Bernard John Seymour, Lord.

525 Colville of Culross, Charles John, Lord.

217 Combermere, Robert Wellington, Viscount.

420 Congleton, Henry, Lord.

3 Connaught and Strathearn, His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert, Duke of.

537 Connemara, Robert, Lord.

175 Cottenham, Kenelm Charles Edward, Earl of.

476 Cottesloe, Thomas Francis, Lord.

79 Coventry, George William, Earl of.

176 Cowley, Henry Arthur Mornington, Earl.

95 Cowper, Francis Thomas de Grey, Earl.

194 Cranbrook, Gathorne, Earl of.

131 Craven, William George Robert, Earl of.

561 Crawshaw, Thomas, Lord.

197 Crewe, Robert Offley Ashburton, Earl of.
338 Crofton, Edward Henry Churchill, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
557 Cromer, Evelyn, Lord.
11 & 228 Cross, Richard Assheton, Viscount. (*Lord Privy Seal.*)
28 Cumberland and Teviotdale, His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick, Duke of.

D.

92 Dartmouth, William Heneage, Earl of.
181 Dartrey, Richard, Earl of.
576 Davey, Horace, Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)
259 de Clifford, Jack Southwell, Lord.
423 de Freyne, Arthur, Lord.
109 De la Warr, Gilbert George Reginald, Earl.
395 de l'Isle and Dudley, Philip, Lord.
407 de Mauley, William Ashley Webb, Lord.
192 de Montalt, Cornwallis, Earl.
547 de Ramsey, William Henry, Lord.
256 de Ros, Dudley Charles, Lord.
392 de Saumarez, James St. Vincent, Lord.
508 de Vesci, John Robert William, Lord. (*Viscount de Vesci.*)
368 Delamere, Hugh, Lord.
64 Denbigh, Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine, Earl of.
393 Denman, Thomas, Lord.
522 Deramore, Robert Wilfrid, Lord.
59 Derby, Frederick Arthur, Earl of.
500 Derwent, Harcourt, Lord.
62 Devon, Henry Hugh, Earl of.
10 & 20 Devonshire, Spencer Compton, Duke of. (*Lord President of the Council.*)
298 Digby, Edward Henry Trafalgar, Lord.
301 Dinevor, Arthur de Cardonnel, Lord.
73 Doncaster, William Henry Walter, Earl of. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
314 Dorchester, Dudley Wilmot, Lord.
277 Dormer, John Baptist Joseph, Lord.
478 Douglas, Charles Alexander, Lord. (*Earl of Home.*)
167 Ducie, Henry John, Earl of.
178 Dudley, William Humble, Earl of.
54 Dufferin and Ava, Frederick Temple, Marquess of.
341 Dunalley, Henry O'Callaghan, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
90 Dundonald, Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
564 Dunleath, Henry Lyle, Lord.
387 Dunmore, Charles Adolphus, Lord. (*Earl of Dunmore.*)
458 Dunning, John, Lord. (*Lord Rollo.*)
331 Dunsany, John William, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
233 Durham, Brooke Foss, Bishop of.
164 Durham, John George, Earl of.

E.

429 Ebury, Robert Wellesley, Lord.
2 Edinburgh, His Royal Highness Alfred Ernest Albert, Duke of.
166 Effingham, Henry, Earl of.
434 Egerton, Wilbraham, Lord.
153 Eldon, John, Earl of.
421 Elgin, Victor Alexander, Lord. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine.*)
346 Ellenborough, Charles Towry Hamilton, Lord.
173 Ellesmere, Francis Charles Granville, Earl of.
524 Elphinstone, Sidney Herbert, Lord.

245 Ely, Alwyne, Bishop of.
474 Emly, Thomas William Gaston, Lord.
349 Erskine, William Macnaghten, Lord.
521 Esher, William Baliol, Lord.
71 Essex, George Devereux de Vere, Earl of.
469 Ettrick, Francis, Lord. (*Lord Napier.*)
42 Exeter, Brownlow Henry George, Marquess of.
243 Exeter, Edward Henry, Bishop of.
214 Exmouth, Edward Fleetwood John, Viscount.

F.

199 Falkland, Byron Plantagenet, Viscount. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
202 Falmouth, Evelyn Edward Thomas, Viscount.
569 Farrer, Thomas Henry, Lord.
480 Fermanagh, John Henry, Lord. (*Earl of Erne.*)
91 Ferrers, Sewallis Edward, Earl.
182 Feversham, William Ernest, Earl of.
549 Field, William Ventris, Lord.
32 Fife, Alexander William George, Duke of.
382 Fingall, Arthur James Francis, Lord. (*Earl of Fingall.*)
317 Fisherwick, George Augustus Hamilton, Lord. (*Marquess of Donegall.*)
438 Fitzhardinge, Charles Paget Fitzhardinge, Lord.
105 Fitzwilliam, William Thomas Spencer, Earl.
300 Foley, Henry Thomas, Lord.
284 Forbes, Horace Courtenay Gammell, Lord. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
369 Forester, Cecil Theodore, Lord.
118 Fortescue, Hugh, Earl.
357 Foxford, William Edmond de Vere Sheaffe, Lord. (*Earl of Limerick.*)

G.

318 Gage, Henry Charles, Lord. (*Viscount Gage.*)
172 Gainsborough, Charles William Francis, Earl of.
352 Gardner, ———, Lord.
484 Gerard, William Cansfield, Lord.
371 Gifford, Edric Frederic, Lord.
584 Glenesk, Algernon, Lord.
235 Gloucester and Bristol, Charles John, Bishop of.
213 Gordon, John Campbell, Viscount. (*Earl of Aberdeen.*)
454 Gormanston, Jenico William Joseph, Lord. (*Viscount Gormanston.*)
221 Gough, Hugh, Viscount.
15 Grafton, Augustus Charles Lennox, Duke of.
98 Graham, Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald, Earl. (*Duke of Montrose.*)
351 Granard, Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings, Lord. (*Earl of Granard.*)
305 Grantley, John Richard Brinsley, Lord.
165 Granville, Granville George, Earl.
466 Greville, Algernon William Fulke, Lord.
141 Grey, Albert Henry George, Earl.
262 Grey de Ruthyn, Rawdon George Grey, Lord.
529 Grimthorpe, Edmund, Lord.
356 Grinstead, Lowry Egerton, Lord. (*Earl of Enniskillen.*)
106 Guilford, Frederick George, Earl of.
327 Gwydir, Peter Robert, Lord.

H.

85 Haddington, George, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
489 Haldon, Lawrence Hesketh, Lord.
222 Halifax, Charles Lindley, Viscount.

8 & 508 Halsbury, Hardinge Stanley, Lord. (*Lord High Chancellor.*)
533 Hamilton of Dalzell, John Glencairn Carter, Lord.
225 Hampden, Henry Robert, Viscount.
477 Hampton, Herbert Perrott Murray, Lord.
220 Hardinge, Henry Charles, Viscount.
107 Hardwicke, Charles Philip, Earl of.
460 Hare, William, Lord. (*Earl of Listowel.*)
144 Harewood, Henry Ulick, Earl of.
481 Harlech, William Richard, Lord.
101 Harrington, Charles Augustus, Earl of.
359 Harris, George Robert Canning, Lord.
143 Harrowby, Dudley Francis Stuart, Earl of.
446 Hartismere, John Major, Lord. (*Lord Henniker.*)
258 Hastings, George Manners, Lord.
397 Hatherton, Edward George Percy, Lord.
208 Hawarden, Cornwallis, Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland.*) (*In another place as Earl de Montalt.*)
299 Hawke, Martin Bladen, Lord.
571 Hawkesbury, Cecil George Savile, Lord.
291 Hay, George, Lord. (*Earl of Kinnoul.*)
337 Headley, Charles Mark, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
198 Hereford, Robert, Viscount.
509 Herries, Marmaduke Francis, Lord.
526 Herschell, Farrer, Lord.
40 Hertford, Hugh de Grey, Marquess of.
377 Heytesbury, William Frederick, Lord.
219 Hill, Rowland Richard, Viscount.
527 Hillingdon, Charles Henry, Lord.
113 Hillsborough, Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell, Earl of. (*Marquess of Downshire.*)
528 Hindlip, Samuel Charles, Lord.
516 Hobhouse, Arthur, Lord.
205 Hood, Francis Wheler, Viscount.
554 Hood of Avalon, Arthur William Acland, Lord.
354 Hopetoun, John Adrian Louis, Lord. (*Earl of Hopetoun.*)
501 Hothfield, Henry James, Lord.
272 Howard de Walden, Frederick George, Lord.
461 Howard of Glossop, Francis Edward, Lord.
154 Howe, Richard William Penn, Earl.
498 Howth, William Ulick Tristram, Lord. (*Earl of Howth.*)
60 Huntingdon, Warner Francis John Plantagenet, Earl of.
215 Hutchinson, John Luke George, Viscount. (*Earl of Donoughmore.*)
447 Hylton, Hedworth Hylton, Lord.

I.

191 Iddesleigh, Walter Stafford, Earl of.
108 Ilchester, Henry Edward, Earl of.
332 Inchiquin, Edward Donough, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
169 Innes, Henry John, Earl. (*Duke of Roxburghe.*)
550 Iveagh, Edward Cecil, Lord.

J.

581 James, Henry, Lord.
80 Jersey, Victor Albert George, Earl of.

K.

417 Keane, John Manley Arbuthnot, Lord.
385 Kenlis, Geoffrey Thomas, Lord. (*Marquess of Headfort.*)

426 Kenmare, Valentine Augustus, Lord. (*Earl of Kenmare.*)

444 Kenry, Windham Thomas, Lord. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount Earl.*)

531 Kensington, William, Lord.

315 Kenyon, Lloyd, Lord.

361 Ker, Schomberg Henry, Lord. (*Marquess of Lothian.*)

450 Kesteven, John Henry, Lord.

555 Kelvin, William, Lord.

335 Kilmaine, Francis William, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

381 Kilmarnock, Charles Gore, Lord. (*Earl of Erroll.*)

157 Kilmorey, Francis Charles, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

180 Kimberley, John, Earl of.

438 Kinnaird, Arthur Fitz-Gerald, Lord.

403 Kintore, Algernon Hawkins Thomond, Lord. (*Earl of Kintore.*)

230 Knutsford, Henry Thurstan, Viscount.

L.

492 Lamington, Charles Wallace Alexander Napier, Lord.

122 Lanesborough, John Vansittart Danvers, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

339 Langford, Hercules Edward, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

35 Lansdowne, Henry Charles Keith, Marquess of.

57 & 188 Lathom, Edward, Earl of. (*Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*)

86 Lauderdale, Frederick Henry, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

456 Lawrence, John Hamilton, Lord.

433 Leconfield, Henry, Lord.

18 Leeds, George Godolphin, Duke of.

170 Leicester, Thomas William, Earl of.

412 Leigh, William Henry, Lord.

204 Leinster, Maurice Viscount. (*Duke of Leinster.*)

89 Leven and Melville, Ronald Ruthven, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

254 Lichfield, Augustus, Bishop of.

163 Lichfield, Thomas Francis, Earl of.

329 Lilford, Thomas, Lord.

242 Lincoln, Edward, Bishop of.

66 Lindsey, Montague, Earl of.

517 Lingen, Ralph Robert Wheeler, Lord.

404 Lismore, George Ponsonby, Lord. (*Viscount Lismore.*)

236 Liverpool, John Charles, Bishop of.

231 Llandaff, Henry, Viscount.

238 Llandaff, Richard, Bishop of.

565 Llangattock, John Allan, Lord.

577 Loch, Henry Brougham, Lord.

343 Loftus, John Henry, Lord. (*Marquess of Ely.*)

193 Londesborough, William Henry Forester, Earl of.

232 London, Mandell, Bishop of.

142 Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil, Earl of.

307 Lovaine, Henry George, Lord. (*Earl Percy.*)

401 Lovat, Simon Joseph, Lord.

171 Lovelace, Ralph Gordon, Earl of.

296 Lovell and Holland, Charles George, Lord. (*Earl of Egmont.*)

126 Lucan, George, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

414 Lurgan, William, Lord.

187 Lytton, Victor Alexander George Robert, Earl of.

436 Lyveden, Fitz-Patrick Henry, Lord.

M.

97 Macclesfield, Thomas Augustus Wolstenholme, Earl of.

536 Macnaghten, Edward, Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

541 Magheramorne, James Douglas, Lord.
121 Malmesbury, Edward James, Earl of.
246 Manchester, James, Bishop of.
25 Manchester, William Angus Drogo, Duke of.
353 Manners, John Thomas, Lord.
282 Manners of Haddon, Henry John Brinsley, Lord. (*Marquess of Granby.*)
115 Mansfield, William David, Earl of.
139 Manvers, Sydney William Herbert, Earl.
82 Mar, John Francis Erskine, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
84 Mar and Kellie, Walter John Francis, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
21 Marlborough, Charles Richard John, Duke of.
552 Masham, Samuel, Lord.
333 Massy, John Thomas William, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
124 Mayo, Dermot Robert Wyndham, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
355 Meldrum, Charles, Lord. (*Marquess of Huntly.*)
210 Melville, Henry, Viscount.
321 Mendip, Leopold George Frederick, Lord. (*Viscount Clifden.*)
443 Meredyth, James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth, Lord. (*Lord Athlumney.*)
410 Methuen, Paul Sanford, Lord.
292 Middleton, Digby Wentworth Bayard, Lord.
362 Minster, Henry Francis, Lord. (*Marquess Conyngham.*)
145 Minto, Gilbert John, Earl of.
445 Monck, Henry Power Charles Stanley, Lord. (*Viscount Monck.*)
539 Monckton, George Edmund Milnes, Lord. (*Viscount Galway.*)
472 Moncreiff, Henry James, Lord.
505 Monk Bretton, John George, Lord.
515 Monkswell, Robert, Lord.
523 Montagu of Beaulieu, Henry John, Lord.
350 Monteagle, Thomas, Lord. (*Marquess of Sligo.*)
415 Monteagle of Brandon, Thomas Spring, Lord.
150 Morley, Albert Edmund, Earl of.
548 Morris, Michael, Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)
83 Morton, Sholto George Watson, Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
389 Mostyn, Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan, Lord.
117 Mount Edgcumbe, William Henry, Earl of.
551 Mount Stephen, George, Lord.
257 Mowbray, Charles Botolph Joseph, Lord.
161 Munster, William George, Earl of.
334 Muskerry, Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

N.

453 Napier, Robert William, Lord.
137 Nelson, Horatio, Earl.
26 Newcastle, Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas, Duke of.
563 Newton, William John, Lord.
12 Norfolk, Henry, Duke of. (*Earl Marshal of England.*)
50 Normanby, Constantine Charles Henry, Marquess of.
270 North, William Henry John, Lord.
43 Northampton, William, Marquess of.
506 Northbourne, Walter Henry, Lord.
185 Northbrook, Thomas George, Earl of.
510 Northington, Anthony Henley, Lord. (*Lord Henley.*)
27 Northumberland, Algernon George, Duke of.
486 Norton, Charles Bowyer, Lord.

O.

417 O'Hagan, Thomas Towneley, Lord.
152 O'Neill, Edward, Lord.
132 Onslow, William Hillier, Earl of.
400 Oranmore and Browne, Geoffrey Dominick Augustus Frederick, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
140 Orford, Robert Horace, Earl of.
367 Oriel, Clotworthy John Eyre, Lord. (*Viscount Massereene.*)
451 Ormathwaite, Arthur, Lord.
363 Ormonde, James Edward William Theobald, Lord. (*Marquess of Ormonde.*)
570 Overtoun, John Campbell, Lord.
227 Oxenbridge, William John, Viscount.
418 Oxenfoord, John, Lord. (*Earl of Stair.*)
239 Oxford, William, Bishop of.

P.

229 Peel, Arthur Wellesley, Viscount.
56 & 61 Pembroke and Montgomery, Sidney, Earl of. (*Lord Steward of the Household.*)
448 Penrhyn, George Sholto Gordon, Lord.
457 Penzance, James Plaisted, Lord.
273 Petre, Bernard Henry Philip, Lord.
583 Pirbright, Henry, Lord.
566 Playfair, Lyon, Lord.
376 Plunket, William Conyngham, Lord.
388 Poltimore, Augustus Frederick George Warwick, Lord.
289 Polwarth, Walter Hugh, Lord. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
293 Ponsonby, Walter William Brabazon, Lord. (*Earl of Bessborough.*)
123 Portarlington, Lionel George Henry Seymour, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
24 Portland, William John Arthur Charles James, Duke of.
224 Portman, William Henry Berkeley, Viscount.
102 Portsmouth, Newton, Earl of.
81 Poulett, William Henry, Earl.
206 and 511 Powerscourt, Mervyn Edward, Viscount. (*Lord Powerscourt.*)
136 Powis, George Charles, Earl of.

R.

110 Radnor, William, Earl of.
425 Raglan, George Fitz-Roy Henry, Lord.
479 Ramsay, Arthur George Maule, Lord. (*Earl of Dalhousie.*)
374 Ranfurly, Uchter John Mark, Lord. (*Earl of Ranfurly.*)
455 Rathdonnell, Thomas Kane, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
582 Rathmore, David Robert, Lord.
183 Ravensworth, Henry George, Earl of.
370 Rayleigh, John William, Lord.
499 Reay, Donald James, Lord.
573 Rendel, Stuart, Lord.
514 Revelstoke, Edward Charles, Lord.
330 Ribblesdale, Thomas, Lord.
14 Richmond, Charles Henry, Duke of.
51 Ripon, George Frederick Samuel, Marquess of.
241 Ripon, William Boyd, Bishop of.
464 Robartes, Thomas Charles, Lord.
553 Roberts of Kandahar, Frederick Sleigh, Lord.
306 Rodney, George Bridges Harley Dennet, Lord.
442 Romilly, John Gaspard Le Marchant, Lord.
133 Romney, Charles, Earl of.
556 Rookwood, Henry John, Lord.

378 Rosebery, Archibald Philip, Lord. (*Earl of Rosebery.*)
138 Rosse, Lawrence, Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
130 Rosslyn, James Francis Harry, Earl of.
405 Rossmore, Derrick Warner William, Lord.
513 Rothschild, Nathaniel Mayer, Lord.
494 Rowton, Montagu William, Lord.
179 Russell, John Francis Stanley, Earl.
575 Russell of Killowen, Charles, Lord.
22 Rutland, John James Robert, Duke of.

S.

485 Sackville, Lionel Sackville, Lord.
251 Saint Albans, John Wogan, Bishop of.
17 Saint Albans, William Amelius Aubrey De Vere, Duke of.
249 Saint Asaph, Alfred George, Bishop of.
149 Saint Germans, Henry Cornwallis, Earl of.
271 Saint John of Bletso, Beauchamp Moubray, Lord.
424 Saint Leonards, Edward Burtenshaw, Lord.
540 Saint Levan, John, Lord.
519 Saint Oswald, Rowland, Lord.
209 Saint Vincent, Carnegie Parker, Viscount.
244 Salisbury, John, Bishop of.
37 Salisbury, Robert Arthur Talbot, Marquess of.
324 Saltersford, James George Henry, Lord. (*Earl of Courtown.*)
285 Saltoun, Alexander William Frederick, Lord. (*Elected for Scotland.*)
468 Sandhurst, William, Lord.
70 Sandwich, Edward George Henry, Earl of.
347 Sandys, Augustus Frederick Arthur, Lord.
547 Savile, John, Lord.
274 Saye and Sele, John Fiennes, Lord.
77 Scarbrough, Aldred Frederick George Beresford, Earl of.
294 Scarsdale, Alfred Nathaniel Holden, Lord.
416 Seaton, John Reginald Upton, Lord.
383 Sefton, William Philip, Lord. (*Earl of Sefton.*)
190 Selborne, William Waldegrave, Earl of.
74 Shaftesbury, Anthony, Earl of.
558 Shand, Alexander Burns, Lord.
348 Sheffield, Henry North, Lord (*Earl of Sheffield.*)
310 Sherborne, Edward Lennox, Lord.
58 Shrewsbury, Charles Henry John, Earl of.
487 Shute, Percy, Lord. (*Viscount Barrington.*)
211 Sidmouth, William Wells, Viscount
366 Silchester, Thomas, Lord. (*Earl of Longford.*)
286 Sinclair, Charles William, Lord (*Elected for Scotland.*)
372 Somerhill, Hubert George, Lord (*Marquess of Clanricarde.*)
308 Somers, Philip Reginald, Lord.
13 Somerset, Algernon, Duke of.
470 Somerton, Sidney James, Lord. (*Earl of Normanton.*)
189 Sondes, George Edward, Earl.
304 Southampton, Charles Henry Lord.
240 Southwell, George, Bishop of.
111 Spencer, John Poyntz, Earl.
279 Stafford, Fitzherbert, Lord.
530 Stalbridge, Richard de Aquila, Lord.

67 Stamford, William, Earl of.

96 Stanhope, Arthur Philip, Earl.

411 Stanley of Alderley, Henry Edward John, Lord.

572 Stanmore, Arthur, Lord.

323 Stewart of Garlies, Alan Plantagenet, Lord. (*Earl of Galloway.*)

155 Stradbroke, George Edward John Mowbray, Earl of.

174 Strafford, George Henry Charles, Earl of.

116 Strange, John James Hugh Henry, Earl. (*Duke of Atholl.*)

399 Stratheden, Hallyburton George, Lord.

504 Strathspey, James, Lord. (*Earl of Seafield.*)

322 Stuart of Castle Stuart, Edmund Archibald, Lord. (*Earl of Moray.*)

409 Sudeley, Charles Douglas Richard, Lord.

507 Sudley, Arthur Saunders William Charles Fox, Lord. (*Earl of Arran.*)

313 Suffield, Charles, Lord.

63 Suffolk and Berkshire, Henry Charles, Earl of.

30 Sutherland, Cromartie, Duke of.

568 Swansea, Ernest Ambrose, Lord.

T.

428 Talbot de Malahide, Richard Wogan, Lord.

93 Tankerville, Charles, Earl of.

156 Temple of Stowe, William Stephen, Earl.

390 Templemore, Henry Spencer, Lord.

212 Templetown, Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy, Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

503 Tennyson, Hallam, Lord.

375 Tenterden, Charles Stuart Henry, Lord.

278 Teynham, Henry John Philip Sidney, Lord.

535 Thring, Henry, Lord.

319 Thurlow, Thomas John, Lord.

483 Tollemache, Wilbraham Frederic, Lord.

287 Torphichen, James Walter, Lord. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

203 Torrington, George Master, Viscount.

36 Townshend, John Villiers Stuart, Marquess.

435 Tredegar, Godfrey Charles, Lord.

493 Trebor, Arthur William, Lord.

253 Truro, John, Bishop of.

422 Truro, Thomas Montague Morrison, Lord.

497 Tweeddale, William Montagu, Lord. (*Marquess of Tweeddale.*)

502 Tweedmouth, Edward, Lord.

311 Tyrone, Henry De la Poer, Lord. (*Marquess of Waterford.*)

V.

158 Vane, Charles Stewart, Earl. (*Marquess of Londonderry.*)

266 Vaux of Harrowden, Hubert George Charles, Lord.

340 Ventry, Dayrolles Blakeney, Lord. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

297 Vernon, George William Henry, Lord.

147 Verulam, James Walter, Earl of.

419 Vivian, George Crespigny Brabazon, Lord.

W.

247 Wakefield, William Walsham, Bishop of.

99 Waldegrave, William Frederick, Earl.

1 Wales, His Royal Highness The Prince of.
302 Walsingham, Thomas, Lord.
578 Wandsworth, Sydney James, Lord.
520 Wantage, Robert James, Lord.
103 Warwick, Earl of (*see* Brooke, p. vi.)
488 Watson, William, Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)
574 Welby, Reginald Earle, Lord.
29 Wellington, Henry, Duke of.
364 Wemyss, Francis Richard, Lord. (*Earl of Wemyss.*)
413 Wenlock, Beilby, Lord.
267 Wentworth, Ralph Gordon, Lord. (*In another place as Earl of Lovelace.*)
439 Westbury, Richard Luttrell Pilkington, Lord.
31 Westminster, Hugh Lupus, Duke of.
65 Westmorland, Anthony Mildmay Julian, Earl of.
184 Wharncliffe, Edward Montagu Stuart Granville, Earl of.
373 Wigan, James Ludovic, Lord. (*Earl of Crawford.*)
265 Willoughby de Broke, Henry, Lord.
135 Wilton, Seymour John Grey, Earl of.
490 Wimborne, Ivor Bertie, Lord.
34 Winchester, Augustus John Henry Beaumont, Marquess of.
234 Winchester, Randall Thomas, Bishop of.
68 Winchilsea and Nottingham, Murray Edward Gordon, Earl of.
269 Windsor, Robert George, Lord.
177 Winton, George Arnulph, Earl of. (*Earl of Eglintoun.*)
226 Wolseley, Garnet Joseph, Viscount.
465 Wolverton, Frederick, Lord.
252 Worcester, John James Stewart, Bishop of.
398 Worlingham, Archibald Brabazon Sparrow, Lord. (*Earl of Gosford.*)
408 Wrottesley, Arthur, Lord.
380 Wynford, William Draper Mortimer, Lord.

Y.

168 Yarborough, Charles Alfred Worsley, Earl of.
4 York, His Royal Highness George Frederick Ernest Albert, Duke of.
9 York, William Dalrymple, Archbishop of.

Z.

55 Zetland, Lawrence, Marquess of.
261 Zouche of Haryngworth, Robert Nathaniel Cecil George, Lord.

The following Lords have Two Numbers, being Twice named in the Roll :—

Lord Halsbury, as Lord High Chancellor and as Lord Halsbury. (Nos. 8 and 510.)

Duke of Devonshire, as Lord President, and as Duke of Devonshire. (Nos. 10 and 20.)

Viscount Cross, as Lord Privy Seal, and as Viscount Cross. (Nos. 11 and 228.)

Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, as Lord Steward, and as Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. (Nos. 56 and 61.)

Earl of Lathom, as Lord Chamberlain, and as Earl of Lathom. (Nos. 57 and 188.)

Earl of Lovelace, as Earl of Lovelace, and as Lord Wentworth. (Nos. 171 and 267.)

Earl de Montalt, as Earl de Montalt and as Viscount Hawarden. (Nos 192 and 208.)

Viscount Powerscourt, as Viscount Powerscourt, and as Lord Powerscourt. (Nos. 206 and 511.)

ROLL

OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN

THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

60 VICTORIÆ, 1897.

(Presented at the Opening of the Session.)

MEM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose, within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

1 His Royal Highness Albert Edward Prince of Wales.

2 His Royal Highness Alfred Ernest Albert Duke of Edinburgh.

3 His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of Connaught and Strathearn.

4 His Royal Highness George Frederick Ernest Albert Duke of York.

5 His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert Duke of Albany.

6 His Royal Highness George William Frederick Charles Duke of Cambridge.

7 Frederick Archbishop of Canterbury.

8 Hardinge Stanley Lord Halsbury *Lord High Chancellor.*

9 William Dalrymple Archbishop of York.

10 Spencer Compton Duke of Devonshire, *Lord President of the Council.*

11 Richard Assheton Viscount Cross, *Lord Privy Seal.*

12 Henry Duke of Norfolk, *Earl Marshal of England.*
13 Algernon Duke of Somerset.
14 Charles Henry Duke of Richmond.
15 Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of Grafton.
16 Henry Charles Fitzroy Duke of Beaufort.
17 William Amelius Aubrey de Verè Duke of Saint Albans.
18 George Godolphin Duke of Leeds.
19 Herbrand Arthur Duke of Bedford.
20 Spencer Compton Duke of Devonshire. *(In another place as Lord President of the Council.)*
21 Charles Richard John Duke of Marlborough.
22 John James Robert Duke of Rutland.
23 Alfred Douglas Duke of Brandon.
24 William John Arthur Charles James Duke of Portland.
25 William Angus Drogo Duke of Manchester.
26 Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of Newcastle.
27 Algernon George Duke of Northumberland.
28 His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale.
29 Henry Duke of Wellington.
30 Cromartie Duke of Sutherland.
31 Hugh Lupus Duke of Westminster.
32 Alexander William George Duke of Fife.
33 George Douglas Duke of Argyll.
34 Augustus John Henry Beaumont Marquess of Winchester.
35 Henry Charles Keith Marquess of Lansdowne.
36 John Villiers Stuart Marquess Townshend.
37 Robert Arthur Talbot Marquess of Salisbury.
38 Thomas Henry Marquess of Bath.
39 James Marquess of Abercorn. *(Duke of Abercorn.)*
40 Hugh de Grey Marquess of Hertford.
41 John Patrick Marquess of Bute.
42 Brownlow Henry George Marquess of Exeter.
43 William Marquess of Northampton.
44 John Charles Marquess Camden.
45 Henry Marquess of Anglesey.
46 George Henry Hugh Marquess of Cholmondeley.
47 Henry Augustus Marquess of Ailesbury.
48 Frederick William John Marquess of Bristol.
49 Archibald Marquess of Ailsa.
50 Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of Normanby.
51 George Frederick Samuel Marquess of Ripon.
52 William Marquess of Abergavenny.
53 Gavin Marquess of Breadalbane.
54 Frederick Temple Marquess of Dufferin and Ava.
55 Lawrence Marquess of Zetland.
56 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, *Lord Steward of the Household.*
57 Edward Earl of Lathom, *Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*
58 Charles Henry John Earl of Shrewsbury.
59 Frederick Arthur Earl of Derby.
60 Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of Huntingdon.
61 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. *(In another place as Lord Steward of the Household.)*
62 Henry Hugh Earl of Devon.
63 Henry Charles Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire.
64 Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of Denbigh.

65 Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of Westmorland.
66 Montague Earl of Lindsey.
67 William Earl of Stamford.
68 Murray Edward Gordon Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham.
69 Edwyn Francis Earl of Chesterfield.
70 Edward George Henry Earl of Sandwich.
71 George Devereux de Vere Earl of Essex.
72 George James Earl of Carlisle.
73 William Henry Walter Earl of Doncaster. *(Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.)*
74 Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury.
75 Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of Berkeley.
76 Montagu Arthur Earl of Abingdon.
77 Aldred Frederick George Beresford Earl of Scarbrough.
78 Arnold Allan Cecil Earl of Albemarle.
79 George William Earl of Coventry.
80 Victor Albert George Earl of Jersey.
81 William Henry Earl Poulett.
82 John Francis Erskine Earl of Mar. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
83 Sholto George Watson Earl of Morton. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
84 Walter John Francis Earl of Mar and Kellie. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
85 George Earl of Haddington. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
86 Frederick Henry Earl of Lauderdale. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
87 David Stanley William Earl of Airlie. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
88 Robert Harris Carnwath Earl of Carnwath. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
89 Ronald Ruthven Earl of Leven and Melville. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
90 Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of Dundonald. *(Elected for Scotland.*
91 Sewallis Edward Earl Ferrers.
92 William Heneage Earl of Dartmouth.
93 Charles Earl of Tankerville.
94 Charles Wightwick Earl of Aylesford.
95 Francis Thomas de Grey Earl Cowper.
96 Arthur Philip Earl Stanhope.
97 George Loveden William Henry Earl of Macclesfield.
98 Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl Graham. *(Duke of Montrose.)*
99 William Frederick Earl Waldegrave.
100 Bertram Earl of Ashburnham.
101 Charles Augustus Earl of Harrington.
102 Newton Earl of Portsmouth.
103 Francis Richard Charles Guy Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick.
104 Sidney Carr Earl of Buckinghamshire.
105 William Thomas Spencer Earl Fitzwilliam.
106 Frederick George Earl of Guilford.
107 Charles Philip Earl of Hardwicke.
108 Henry Edward Earl of Ilchester.
109 Gilbert George Reginald Earl De la Warr.
110 William Earl of Radnor.
111 John Poyntz Earl Spencer.
112 Seymour Henry Earl Bathurst.
113 Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of Hillsborough. *(Marquess of Downshire.)*
114 Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon.
115 William David Earl of Mansfield.
116 John James Hugh Henry Earl Strange. *(Duke of Atholl.)*
117 William Henry Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.
118 Hugh Earl Fortescue.
119 George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Earl of Carnarvon.
120 George Henry Earl Cadogan.
121 Edward James Earl of Malmesbury.

122 John Vansittart Danvers Earl of Lanesborough. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

123 Lionel George Henry Seymour Earl of Portarlington. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

124 Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of Mayo. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

125 Hugh Earl Annesley. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

126 George Earl of Lucan. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

127 Somerset Richard Earl of Belmore. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

128 James Francis Earl of Bandon. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

129 James Earl of Caledon. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

130 James Francis Harry Earl of Rosslyn.

131 William George Robert Earl of Craven.

132 William Hillier Earl of Onslow.

133 Charles Earl of Romney.

134 Walter John Earl of Chichester.

135 Seymour John Grey Earl of Wilton.

136 George Charles Earl of Powis.

137 Horatio Earl Nelson.

138 Lawrence Earl of Rosse. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

139 Sydney William Herbert Earl Manvers.

140 Robert Horace Earl of Orford.

141 Albert Henry George Earl Grey.

142 Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.

143 Dudley Francis Stuart Earl of Harrowby.

144 Henry Ulick Earl of Harewood.

145 Gilbert John Earl of Minto.

146 Alan Frederick Earl Cathcart.

147 James Walter Earl of Verulam.

148 Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl Brownlow.

149 Henry Cornwallis Earl of Saint Germans.

150 Albert Edmund Earl of Morley.

151 Orlando George Charles Earl of Bradford.

152 William Earl Beauchamp.

153 John Earl of Eldon.

154 Richard William Penn Earl Howe.

155 George Edward John Mowbray Earl of Stradbroke.

156 William Stephen Earl Temple of Stowe.

157 Francis Charles Earl of Kilmorey. *(Elected for Ireland.)*

158 Charles Stewart Earl Vane. *(Marquess of Londonderry.)*

159 William Archer Earl Amherst.

160 John Frederick Vaughan Earl Cawdor.

161 William George Earl of Munster.

162 Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of Camperdown.

163 Thomas Francis Earl of Lichfield.

164 John George Earl of Durham.

165 Granville George Earl Granville.

166 Henry Earl of Effingham.

167 Henry John Earl of Ducie.

168 Charles Alfred Worsley Earl of Yarborough.

169 Henry John Earl Innes. *(Duke of Roxburghe.)*

170 Thomas William Earl of Leicester.

171 Ralph Gordon Earl of Lovelace.

172 Charles William Francis Earl of Gainsborough.

173 Francis Charles Granville Earl of Ellesmere.

174 George Henry Charles Earl of Strafford.

175 Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of Cottenham.

176 Henry Arthur Mornington Earl Cowley.

177 George Arnulph Earl of Winton. *(Earl of Eglintoun.)*

178 William Humble Earl of Dudley.

179 John Francis Stanley Earl Russell.

180 John Earl of Kimberley.

181 Richard Earl of Dartrey.
182 William Ernest Earl of Feversham.
183 Henry George Earl of Ravensworth.
184 Edward Montagu Stuart Granville Earl of Wharncliffe.
185 Thomas George Earl of Northbrook.
186 Herbert John Earl Cairns.
187 Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of Lytton.
188 Edward Earl of Lathom. *(In another place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household.)*
189 George Edward Earl Sondes.
190 William Waldegrave Earl of Selborne.
191 Walter Stafford Earl of Iddesleigh.
192 Cornwallis Earl de Montalt.
193 William Henry Forester Earl of Londesborough.
194 Gathorne Earl of Cranbrook.
195 Gilbert Henry Earl of Ancaster.
196 Charles Robert Earl Carrington.
197 Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of Crewe.
198 Robert Viscount Hereford.
199 Byron Plantagenet Viscount Falkland. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
200 Henry Viscount Bolingbroke and St. John.
201 Charles George Viscount Cobham.
202 Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount Falmouth.
203 George Master Viscount Torrington.
204 Maurice Viscount Leinster. *(Duke of Leinster.)*
205 Francis Wheler Viscount Hood.
206 Mervyn Edward Viscount Powerscourt. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
207 Henry William Crosbie Viscount Bangor. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
208 Cornwallis Viscount Hawarden. *(Elected for Ireland.) (In another place as Earl de Montalt.)*
209 Carnegie Parker Viscount Saint Vincent.
210 Henry Viscount Melville.
211 William Wells Viscount Sidmouth.
212 Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount Templetown. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
213 John Campbell Viscount Gordon. *(Earl of Aberdeen.)*
214 Edward Fleetwood John Viscount Exmouth.
215 John Luke George Viscount Hutchinson. *(Earl of Donoughmore.)*
216 William Frederick Viscount Clancarty. *(Earl of Clancarty.)*
217 Robert Wellington Viscount Combermere.
218 Henry Charles Viscount Canterbury
219 Rowland Richard Viscount Hill.
220 Henry Charles Viscount Hardinge.
221 Hugh Viscount Gough.
222 Charles Lindley Viscount Halifax.
223 Alexander Nelson Viscount Bridport.
224 William Henry Berkeley Viscount Portman.
225 Henry Robert Viscount Hampden.
226 Garnet Joseph Viscount Wolseley.
227 William John Viscount Oxenbridge.
228 Richard Assheton Viscount Cross. *(In another place as Lord Privy Seal.)*
229 Arthur Wellesley Viscount Peel.
230 Henry Thurstan Viscount Knutsford.
231 Henry Viscount Llandaff.
232 Mandell Bishop of London.
233 Brooke Foss Bishop of Durham.
234 Randall Thomas Bishop of Winchester.
235 Charles John Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol.
236 John Charles Bishop of Liverpool.
237 Ernest Roland Bishop of Chichester.
238 Richard Bishop of Llandaff.

239 William Bishop of Oxford.
240 George Bishop of Southwell.
241 William Boyd Bishop of Ripon.
242 Edward Bishop of Lincoln.
243 Edward Henry Bishop of Exeter.
244 John Bishop of Salisbury.
245 Alwyne Bishop of Ely.
246 James Bishop of Manchester.
247 William Walsham Bishop of Wakefield.
248 Francis John Bishop of Chester.
249 Alfred George Bishop of Saint Asaph.
250 Daniel Lewis Bishop of Bangor.
251 John Wogan Bishop of Saint Albans.
252 John James Stewart Bishop of Worcester.
253 John Bishop of Truro.
254 Augustus Bishop of Lichfield.
255 John Wareing Bishop of Carlisle.
256 Dudley Charles Lord de Ros.
257 Charles Botolph Joseph Lord Mowbray.
258 George Manners Lord Hastings.
259 Jack Southwell Lord de Clifford.
260 Charles Henry Rolle Lord Clinton.
261 Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord Zouche of Haryngworth.
262 Rawdon George Grey Lord Grey de Ruthyn.
263 Charles Edward Hastings Lord Botreaux. *(Earl of Loudoun.)*
264 Francis Robert Lord Camoys.
265 Henry Lord Willoughby de Broke.
266 Hubert George Charles Lord Vaux of Harrowden.
267 Ralph Gordon Lord Wentworth. *(In another place as Earl of Lovelace.)*
268 Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord Braye.
269 Robert George Lord Windsor.
270 William Henry John Lord North.
271 Beauchamp Moubray Lord Saint John of Bletso.
272 Frederick George Lord Howard de Walden.
273 Bernard Henry Philip Lord Petre.
274 John Fiennes Lord Saye and Sele.
275 John Francis Lord Arundell of Wardour.
276 Edward Henry Stuart Lord Clifton. *(Earl of Darnley.)*
277 John Baptist Joseph Lord Dormer.
278 Henry John Philip Sidney Lord Teynham.
279 Fitzherbert Edward Lord Stafford.
280 George Frederick William Lord Byron.
281 Lewis Henry Hugh Lord Clifford of Chudleigh.
282 Henry John Brinsley Lord Manners of Haddon. *(Marquess of Granby.)*
283 Henry de Vere Lord Barnard.
284 Horace Courtenay Gammell Lord Forbes. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
285 Alexander William Frederick Lord Saltoun. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
286 Charles William Lord Sinclair. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
287 James Walter Lord Torphichen. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
288 Alexander Hugh Lord Balfour of Burleigh. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
289 Walter Hugh Lord Polwarth. *(Elected for Scotland.)*
290 Richard Edmund St. Lawrence Lord Boyle. *(Earl of Cork and Orrery.)*
291 George Lord Hay. *(Earl of Kinnoul.)*
292 Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord Middleton.
293 Walter William Brabazon Lord Ponsonby. *(Earl of Bessborough.)*
294 Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord Scarsdale.
295 George Florance Lord Boston.
296 Charles George Lord Lovell and Holland. *(Earl of Egmont.)*

297 George William Henry Lord Vernon.
298 Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord Digby
299 Martin Bladen Lord Hawke.
300 Henry Thomas Lord Foley.
301 Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dynevor.
302 Thomas Lord Walsingham.
303 William Lord Bagot.
304 Charles Henry Lord Southampton.
305 John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley.
306 George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney.
307 Henry George Lord Lovaine. *(Earl Percy.)*
308 Philip Reginald Lord Somers.
309 Richard Henry Lord Berwick.
310 Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne.
311 Henry De la Poer Lord Tyrone. *(Marquess of Waterford.)*
312 Richard Henry Lord Carleton. *(Earl of Shannon.)*
313 Charles Lord Suffield.
314 Dudley Wilmot Lord Dorchester.
315 Lloyd Lord Kenyon.
316 Charles Cornwallis Lord Braybrooke.
317 George Augustus Hamilton Lord Fisherwick. *(Marquess of Donegall.)*
318 Henry Charles Lord Gage. *(Viscount Gage.)*
319 Thomas John Lord Thurlow
320 William Morton Lord Auckland.
321 Leopold George Frederick Lord Mendip. *(Viscount Clifden.)*
322 Edmund Archibald Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. *(Earl of Moray.)*
323 Alan Plantagenet Lord Stewart of Garlies. *(Earl of Galloway.)*
324 James George Henry Lord Saltersford. *(Earl of Courtown.)*
325 William Lord Brodrick. *(Viscount Midleton.)*
326 Augustus Cholmondeley Lord Calthorpe.
327 Peter Robert Lord Gwydir.
328 William Thomas Lord Bolton.
329 John Lord Lilford.
330 Thomas Lord Ribblesdale.
331 John William Lord Dunsany. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
332 Edward Donough Lord Inchiquin. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
333 John Thomas William Lord Massy. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
334 Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord Muskerry. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
335 Francis William Lord Kilmaine. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
336 Luke Gerald Lord Clonbrock. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
337 Charles Mark Lord Headley. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
338 Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
339 Hercules Edward Lord Langford. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
340 Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
341 Henry O'Callaghan Lord Dunalley. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
342 Eyre Challoner Henry Lord Clarina. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
343 John Henry Lord Loftus. *(Marquess of Ely.)*
344 William Lord Carysfort. *(Earl of Carysfort.)*
345 George Ralph Lord Abercromby.
346 Charles Towry Hamilton Lord Ellenborough.
347 Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord Sandys.
348 Henry North Lord Sheffield. *(Earl of Sheffield.)*
349 William Macnaghten Lord Erskine.
350 Thomas Lord Monteagle. *(Marquess of Sligo.)*
351 Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord Granard. *(Earl of Granard.)*

352 ——— Lord Gardner.
353 John Thomas Lord Manners.
354 John Adrian Louis Lord Hopetoun. *(Earl of Hopetoun.)*
355 Charles Lord Meldrum. *(Marquess of Huntly.)*
356 Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. *(Earl of Enniskillen.)*
357 William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord Foxford. *(Earl of Limerick.)*
358 Victor Albert Francis Charles Lord Churchill.
359 George Robert Canning Lord Harris.
360 Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester.
361 Schomberg Henry Lord Ker. *(Marquess of Lothian.)*
362 Henry Francis Lord Minster. *(Marquess Conyngham.)*
363 James Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. *(Marquess of Ormonde.)*
364 Francis Richard Lord Wemyss. *(Earl of Wemyss.)*
365 John Strange Lord Clanbrassill. *(Earl of Roden.)*
366 Thomas Lord Silchester. *(Earl of Longford.)*
367 Clotworthy John Eyre Lord Oriel. *(Viscount Massereene.)*
368 Hugh Lord Delamere.
369 Cecil Theodore Lord Forester.
370 John William Lord Rayleigh.
371 Edric Frederick Lord Gifford.
372 Hubert George Lord Somerhill. *(Marquess of Clanricarde.)*
373 James Ludovic Lord Wigan. *(Earl of Crawford.)*
374 Uchter John Mark Lord Ranfurly. *(Earl of Ranfurly.)*
375 Charles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden.
376 William Conyngham Lord Plunket.
377 William Frederick Lord Heytesbury.
378 Archibald Philip Lord Rosebery. *(Earl of Rosebery.)*
379 Richard James Lord Clanwilliam. *(Earl of Clanwilliam.)*
380 William Draper Mortimer Lord Wynford.
381 Charles Gore Lord Kilmarnock. *(Earl of Erroll.)*
382 Arthur James Francis Lord Fingall. *(Earl of Fingall.)*
383 William Philip Lord Sefton. *(Earl of Sefton.)*
384 Charles Lord Clements. *(Earl of Leitrim.)*
385 Geoffrey Thomas Lord Kenlis. *(Marquess of Headfort.)*
386 Reginald Lord Chaworth. *(Earl of Meath.)*
387 Charles Adolphus Lord Dunmore. *(Earl of Dunmore.)*
388 Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore.
389 Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn.
390 Henry Spencer Lord Templemore.
391 Valentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry.
392 James St. Vincent Lord de Saumarez.
393 Thomas Lord Denman.
394 James Yorke MacGregor Lord Abinger.
395 Philip Lord de l'Isle and Dudley.
396 Francis Denzil Edward Lord Ashburton.
397 Edward George Percy Lord Hatherton.
398 Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. *(Earl of Gosford.)*
399 Hallyburton George Lord Strathеden.
400 Geoffrey Dominick Augustus Frederick Lord Oranmore and Browne. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
401 Simon Joseph Lord Lovat.
402 William Bateman Lord Bateman.

403 Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. *(Earl of Kintore.)*
404 George Ponsonby Lord Lismore. *(Viscount Lismore.)*
405 Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore.
406 Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew.
407 William Ashley Webb Lord de Mauley.
408 Arthur Lord Wrottesley.
409 Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley.
410 Paul Sanford Lord Methuen.
411 Henry Edward John Lord Stanley of Alderley.
412 William Henry Lord Leigh.
413 Beilby Lord Wenlock.
414 William Lord Lurgan.
415 Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon.
416 John Reginald Upton Lord Seaton.
417 John Manley Arbuthnot Lord Keane.
418 John Lord Oxenfoord. *(Earl of Stair.)*
419 George Crespigny Brabazon Lord Vivian.
420 Henry Lord Congleton.
421 Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. *(Earl of Elgin and Kincardine.)*
422 Thomas Montague Morrison Lord Truro.
423 Arthur Lord de Freyne.
424 Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards.
425 George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan.
426 Valentine Augustus Lord Kenmare. *(Earl of Kenmare.)*
427 Henry Lord Belper.
428 Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide
429 Robert Wellesley Lord Ebury.
430 Charles Compton William Lord Chesham.
431 Frederick Augustus Lord Chelmsford.
432 John Lord Churston.
433 Henry Lord Leconfield.
434 Wilbraham Lord Egerton.
435 Godfrey Charles Lord Tredegar.
436 Fitz-Patrick Henry Lord Lyveden.
437 Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux.
438 Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird.
439 Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury.
440 Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge.
441 Luke Lord Annaly.
442 John Gaspard Le Marchant Lord Romilly.
443 James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. *(Lord Athlumney.)*
444 Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. *(Earl of Dunraven and Mount Earl.)*
445 Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord Monck. *(Viscount Monck.)*
446 John Major Lord Hartismere. *(Lord Henniker.)*
447 Hedworth Hylton Lord Hylton.
448 George Sholto Gordon Lord Penrhyn.
449 Gustavus Russell Lord Brancepeth. *(Viscount Boyne.)*
450 John Henry Lord Kesteven.
451 Arthur Lord Ormathwaite.
452 Edward Lord O'Neill.
453 Robert William Lord Napier.
454 Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. *(Viscount Gormanston.)*
455 Thomas Kane Lord Rathdonnell. *(Elected for Ireland.)*
456 John Hamilton Lord Lawrence.
457 James Plaisted Lord Penzance.
458 John Lord Dunning. *(Lord Rollo.)*
459 James Lord Balinhard. *(Earl of Southesk.)*
460 William Lord Hare. *(Earl of Listowel.)*

461 Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop.

462 Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown.

463 John Emerich Edward Lord Acton.

464 Thomas Charles Lord Robartes.

465 Frederick Lord Wolverton.

466 Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville.

467 Thomas Towneley Lord O'Hagan.

468 William Lord Sandhurst.

469 Francis Lord Ettrick. *(Lord Napier.)*

470 Sidney James Lord Somerton. *(Earl of Normanton.)*

471 Henry Campbell Lord Aberdare.

472 Henry James Lord Moncreiff.

473 Bernard John Seymour Lord Coleridge.

474 Thomas William Gaston Lord Emly.

475 Chichester Samuel Lord Carlingford. *(Lord Clermont.)*

476 Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe.

477 Herbert Perrott Murray Lord Hampton.

478 Charles Alexander Lord Douglas. *(Earl of Home.)*

479 Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsay. *(Earl of Dalhousie.)*

480 John Henry Lord Fermanagh. *(Earl of Erne.)*

481 William Richard Lord Harlech.

482 Henry Gerard Lord Alington.

483 Wilbraham Frederic Lord Tollemache.

484 William Cansfield Lord Gerard.

485 Lionel Sackville Lord Sackville.

486 Charles Bowyer Lord Norton.

487 Percy Lord Shute. *(Viscount Barrington.)*

488 William Lord Watson. *(A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.)*

489 Lawrence Hesketh Lord Haldon.

490 Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne.

491 Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun.

492 Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord Lamington.

493 Arthur William Lord Trevor.

494 Montagu William Lord Rowton.

495 Edward Lord Brabourne.

496 Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill.

497 William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. *(Marquess of Tweeddale.)*

498 William Ulick Tristram Lord Howth. *(Earl of Howth.)*

499 Donald James Lord Reay.

500 Harcourt Lord Derwent.

501 Henry James Lord Hothfield.

502 Edward Lord Tweedmouth.

503 Hallam Lord Tennyson.

504 James Lord Strathspey. *(Earl of Seafield.)*

505 John George Lord Monk Bretton.

506 Walter Henry Lord Northbourne.

507 Arthur Saunders William Charles Fox Lord Sudley. *(Earl of Arran.)*

508 John Robert William Lord de Vesci. *(Viscount de Vesci.)*

509 Marmaduke Francis Lord Herries.

510 Hardinge Stanley Lord Halsbury. *(In another place as Lord High Chancellor.)*

511 Mervyn Edward Lord Powerscourt. *(In another place as Viscount Powerscourt.)*

512 Anthony Henley Lord Northington. *(Lord Henley.)*

513 Nathaniel Mayer Lord Rothschild.

514 Edward Charles Lord Revelstoke.

515 Robert Lord Monkswell.

516 Arthur Lord Hobhouse.

517 Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord Lingen.

518 Edward Lord Ashbourne.

519 Rowland Lord Saint Oswald.

520 Robert James Lord Wantage.

521 William Baliol Lord Esher

522 Robert Wilfrid Lord Deramore.

523 Henry John Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.
524 Sidney Herbert Lord Elphinstone.
525 Charles John Lord Colville of Culross.
526 Farrer Lord Herschell.
527 Charles Henry Lord Hillingdon.
528 Samuel Charles Lord Hindlip.
529 Edmund Lord Grimthorpe.
530 Richard de Aquila Lord Stalbridge.
531 William Lord Kensington.
532 Michael Arthur Lord Burton.
533 John Glencairn Carter Lord Hamilton of Dalzell.
534 Thomas Lord Brassey.
535 Henry Lord Thring.
536 Edward Lord Macnaghten. *(A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.)*
537 Robert Lord Connemara.
538 Claude Lord Bowes. *(Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne.)*
539 George Edmund Milnes Lord Monckton. *(Viscount Galway.)*
540 John Lord Saint Levan.
541 James Douglas Lord Magheramorne.
542 William George Lord Armstrong.
543 George Limbrey Lord Basing.
544 William Henry Lord de Ramsey.
545 William Meriton Lord Cheylesmore.
546 Egerton Lord Addington.
547 John Lord Savile.
548 Michael Lord Morris. *(A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.)*
549 William Ventris Lord Field.
550 Edward Cecil Lord Iveagh.
551 George Lord Mount Stephen.
552 Samuel Lord Masham.
553 Frederick Sleigh Lord Roberts of Kandahar.
554 Arthur William Acland Lord Hood of Avalon.
555 William Lord Kelvin.
556 Henry John Lord Rookwood.
557 Evelyn Lord Cromer.
558 Alexander Burns Lord Shand.
559 George Lord Ashcombe.
560 Archibald Campbell Lord Blythswood.
561 Thomas Lord Crawshaw.
562 William Amhurst Lord Amherst of Hackney.
563 William John Lord Newton.
564 Henry Lyle Lord Dunleath.
565 John Allan Lord Llangattock.
566 Lyon Lord Playfair.
567 Cyril Lord Battersea.
568 Ernest Ambrose Lord Swansea.
569 Thomas Henry Lord Farrer.
570 John Campbell Lord Overtoun.
571 Cecil George Savile Lord Hawkesbury.
572 Arthur Lord Stanmore.
573 Stuart Lord Rendel
574 Reginald Earle Lord Welby.
575 Charles Lord Russell of Killowen.
576 Horace Lord Davey. *(A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.)*
577 Henry Brougham Lord Loch.
578 Sydney James Lord Wandsworth.
579 James Lord Ashton.
580 Herbert Coulstoun Lord Burghclere.
581 Henry Lord James.
582 David Robert Lord Rathmore.
583 Henry Lord Pirbright.
584 Algernon Lord Glenesk.
585 Henry Hucks Lord Aldenham.
586 Edward Lord Heneage.
587 John Wingfield Lord Malcolm of Poltalloch.
588* Hercules George Robert Lord Rosmead.

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* This Number is in excess of the total Number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, the Discrepancy being caused by the following Lords being twice named in the Roll:

Lord Halsbury as Lord High Chancellor and as Lord Halsbury . . . . . . } (Nos. 8 and 510).

Duke of Devonshire as Lord President and as Duke of Devonshire	(Nos. 10 and 20).
Viscount Cross as Lord Privy Seal and as Viscount Cross	(Nos. 11 and 228).
Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery as Lord Steward and as Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery	(Nos. 56 and 61).
Earl of Lathom as Lord Chamberlain and as Earl of Lathom	(Nos. 57 and 188).
Earl of Lovelace as Earl of Lovelace and as Lord Wentworth	(Nos. 171 and 267).
Earl de Montalt as Earl de Montalt and as Viscount Hawarden	(Nos. 192 and 208).
Viscount Powerscourt as Viscount Powerscourt and as Lord Powerscourt	(Nos. 206 and 511).

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE FOURTEENTH OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

(Compiled at the Opening of the Session.)

A.

Abraham, William *(Cork County, N.E.)*.

Abraham, William *(Glamorgan, Rhondda)*

Acland-Hood, Captain Sir Alexander Fuller, Bart. *(Somerset, Wellington)*.

Acland, Right Hon. Arthur Herbert Dyke *(York, W.R., Rotherham)*.

Aird, John *(Paddington, N.)*.

Akers-Douglas, Right Hon. A. *(Kent, St. Augustine's)*.

Allan, William *(Gateshead)*.

Allen, William *(Newcastle-under-Lyme)*.

Allison, Robert Andrew *(Cumberland, Eskdale)*

Allsopp, Hon. George Higginson *(Worcester)*.

Ambrose, Robert *(Mayo, W.)*.

Ambrose, William *(Middlesex, Harrow)*.

Anstruther, Henry Torrens *(St. Andrews Burghs)*.

Arch, Joseph *(Norfolk, N.W.)*.

Arnold, Alfred *(Halifax)*.

Arnold-Forster, Hugh Oakeley *(Belfast, W.)*.

Arrol, Sir William, Knt. *(Ayrshire, S.)*.

Ascroft, Robert *(Oldham)*.

Asher, Alexander *(Elgin Burghs)*.

Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis, Knt. *(Sheffield, Ecclesall)*.

Ashton, Thomas Gair *(Beds, Luton)*.

Asquith, Right Hon. Herbert Henry *(Fife, E.)*.

Atherley-Jones, Llewellyn Archer *(Durham, N.W.)*.

Atkinson, Right Hon. John *(Londonderry, N.)*.

Austin, Sir John, Bart. *(York, W.R., Osgoldcross)*.

Austin, Michael *(Limerick, W.)*.

B.

Baden-Powell, Sir George Smyth, K.C.M.G. *(Liverpool, Kirkdale)*.

Bagot, Captain Josceline FitzRoy *(Westmorland, Kendal)*.

Bailey, James *(Newington, Walworth)*.

Baillie, James Evan Bruce *(Inverness-shire)*.

Bainbridge, Emerson *(Lincoln, Gainsborough)*.

Baird, John George Alexander *(Glasgow, Central)*.

Baker, Sir John, Knt. *(Portsmouth)*.

Balcarres, David Alexander Edward Lindsay, Earl of *(Lancashire, N., Chorley)*.

Baldwin, Alfred *(Worcester, Bewdley)*.

Balfour, Right Hon. Arthur James *(Manchester, E.)*.

Balfour, Right Hon. Gerald William *(Leeds, Central)*.

Balfour, Right Hon. John Blair *(Clackmannan and Kinross)*.

Banbury, Frederick George *(Camberwell, Peckham)*.

Banes, Major George Edward *(West Ham, S.)*.

Barlow, John Emmott *(Somerset, Frome)*.

Barnes, Frederic Gorell *(Kent, Faversham)*.

Barry, Edward *(Cork County, S.)*.

Barry, Francis Tress *(Windsor)*.

Bartley, George Christopher Trout *(Islington, N.)*.

Barton, Dunbar Plunket *(Armagh, Mid.)*.

Bass, Hamar Alfred *(Staffordshire, W.)*.

Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin *(Gloucester, Cirencester)*.

Bayley, Thomas *(Derby, Chesterfield)*.

Beach, Right Hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks, Bart. *(Bristol, W.)*

Beach, William Withers Bramston *(Hants, Andover)*.

Beaumont, Wentworth Canning Blackett *(Northumberland, Hexham)*.

Beckett, Ernest William *(York, N.R., Whitby)*.

Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull *(Glasgow, St. Rollox)*.

Bemrose, Henry Howe *(Derby)*.

Bentinck, Lord Henry Cavendish *(Nottingham, S.)*

Bethell, Captain George Robert *(York, E.R., Holderness)*.

Bhownaggree, Mancherjee Merwanjee, *(Bethnal Green, N.E.)*.

Biddulph, Michael *(Herefordshire, Ross)*.

Bigham, John Charles *(Liverpool, Exchange)*.

Bigwood, James *(Middlesex, Brentford.*

Bill, Charles *(Staffordshire, Leek)*.

Birrell, Augustine *(Fife, W.)*.

Blake, Edward *(Longford, S.)*

Blundell, Colonel Henry Blundell-Hollingshead *(Lancashire, S.W., Ince)*.

Bolitho, Thomas Bedford *(Cornwall, St. Ives)*.

Bolton, Thos. Dolling *(Derbyshire, N.E.)*.

Bond, Edward *(Nottingham, E.)*

Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme *(Surrey, Wimbledon)*.

Boulnois, Edmund *(Marylebone, E.)*

Bousfield, William Robert *(Hackney, N.)*

Bowles, Major Henry Ferriman *(Middlesex, Enfield)*.

Bowles, Thomas Gibson *(Lynn Regis)*.

Brassey, Albert *(Oxon, Banbury)*.

Brigg, John *(York, W.R., Keighley)*.

Broadhurst, Henry *(Leicester)*.

Brodrick, Right Hon. William St. John Fremantle *(Surrey, Guildford)*.

Brookfield, Arthur Montagu *(Sussex, Rye)*.

Brown, Alexander Hargreaves *(Shropshire, Wellington)*.

Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson, Bart. *(Cheshire, Northwich)*.

Bryce, Right Hon. James *(Aberdeen, S.)*.

Brymer, William Ernest *(Dorset, S)*.

Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn *(Aberdeenshire, E.)*.

Bucknill, Thomas Townsend *(Surrey, Epsom)*.

Bullard, Sir Harry, Knt. *(Norwich)*.

Burdett-Coutts, William Lehmann Ashmead-Bartlett *(Westminster)*.

Burns, John *(Battersea)*.

Burt, Thomas *(Morpeth)*.

Butcher, John George *(York City)*.

Buxton, Sydney Charles *(Tower Hamlets, Poplar)*.

Byrne, Edmund Widdrington *(Essex, Walthamstow)*.

C.

Caldwell, James *(Lanark, Mid).*

Cameron, Robert *(Durham, Houghton-le-Spring).*

Campbell-Bannerman, Right Hon. Sir Henry, G.C.B. *(Stirling Burghs).*

Campbell, James Alexander *(Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities).*

Carew, James Laurence *(Dublin, College Green).*

Carlile, William Walter *(Bucks, N.).*

Carson, Right Hon. Edward Henry *(Dublin University).*

Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton *(Newry).*

Causton, Richard Knight *(Southwark, W.).*

Cavendish, Richard Frederick *(Lancashire, N., North Lonsdale).*

Cavendish, Victor Christian William *(Derbyshire, W.).*

Cawley, Frederick *(Lancashire, S.E., Prestwich).*

Cayzer, Charles William *(Barrow-in-Furness).*

Cecil, Lord Hugh Richard Heathcote *(Greenwich).*

Chaloner, Captain Richard G. W. *(Wilts, Westbury).*

Chamberlain, Joseph Austen *(Worcestershire, E.).*

Chamberlain, Right Hon. Joseph *(Birmingham, W.)*

Channing, Francis Allston *(Northants, E.).*

Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry *(Lincolnshire, Sleaford).*

Charrington, Spencer *(Tower Hamlets, Mile End).*

Chelsea, Henry Arthur Cadogan, Viscount *(Bury St. Edmunds).*

Clancy, John Joseph *(Dublin County, N).*

Clare, Octavius Leigh *(Lancashire, S.E., Eccles).*

Clark, Gavin Brown *(Caithness-shire).*

Clarke, Sir Edward George, Knt. *(Plymouth).*

Clough, Walter Owen *(Portsmouth).*

Cochrane, Hon. Thomas Horatio Arthur Ernest *(Ayrshire, N.).*

Coddington, Sir William, Bart. *(Blackburn).*

Coghill, Douglas Harry *(Stoke-upon-Trent).*

Cohen, Benjamin Louis *(Islington, E.).*

Collery, Bernard *(Sligo, N.).*

Collings, Right Hon. Jesse *(Birmiugham, Bordesley).*

Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready, K.C.M.G. *(Great Yarmouth).*

Colston, Charles Edward Hungerford Athole *(Gloucester, Thornbury).*

Colville, John *(Lanark, N.E.).*

Combe, Charles Harvey *(Surrey, Chertsey).*

Commins, Andrew *(Cork County, S.E.).*

Compton, William George Spencer Scott, Earl *(York, W.R., Barnsley).*

Compton, Lord Alwyne Frederick *(Beds, Biggleswade).*

Condon, Thomas Joseph *(Tipperary, E.)*

Cook, Frederick Lucas *(Lambeth, Kennington).*

Cooke, Charles Wallwyn Radcliffe *(Hereford).*

Corbet, William Joseph *(Wicklow, E.)*

Corbett, Archibald Cameron *(Glasgow, Tradeston).*

Cotton-Jodrell, Colonel Edward Thomas Davenant *(Cheshire, Wirral).*

Courtney, Right Hon. Leonard Henry *(Cornwall, Bodmin).*

Cox, Robert *(Edinburgh, S.).*

Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy *(Norfolk, N.).*

Cranborne, James Edward Hubert Gascoyne Cecil, Viscount *(Rochester).*

Crean, Eugene *(Queen's County, Ossory).*

Crilly, Daniel *(Mayo, N.).*

Cripps, Charles Alfred *(Gloucester, Stroud).*

Crombie, John William *(Kincardineshire).*

Cross, Alexander *(Glasgow, Camlachie).*

Cross, Herbert Shepherd *(Bolton).*

Cruddas, William Donaldson *(Newcastle-upon-Tyne).*

Cubitt, Hon. Henry *(Surrey, Reigate).*

Curran, Thomas Bartholomew *(Donegal, N.).*

Curran, Thomas *(Sligo, S.).*

Currie, Sir Donald, K.C.M.G. *(Perth, W.).*

Curzon, Right Hon. George Nathaniel *(Lancashire, S.W., Southport).*

Curzon, George Richard Penn, Viscount *(Bucks, Wycombe).*

D.

Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh *(Camberwell, N.).*

Dalkeith, Earl of *(Roxburgh).*

Dalrymple, Sir Charles, Bart. *(Ipswich).*

Daly, James *(Monaghan, S.).*

Dalziel, James Henry *(Kirkcaldy Burghs).*

Dane, Richard Martin *(Fermanagh, N.)*

Darling, Charles John *(Deptford).*

Davenport, William Bromley *(Cheshire, Macclesfield).*

Davies, Horatio David *(Chatham).*

Davies, Matthew Vaughan- *(Cardiganshire).*

Davies, William Rees- *(Pembrokeshire.)*

Davitt, Michael *(Mayo, S.).*

Denny, Colonel John McAusland *(Kilmarnock Burghs).*

Dickson-Poynder, Sir John Poynder, Bart. *(Wilts, Chippenham).*

Dilke, Right Hon. Sir Charles Wentworth, Bart. *(Gloucester, Forest of Dean).*

Dillon, John *(Mayo, E.).*

Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph *(Cheshire, Altrinchan).*

Dixon, George *(Birmingham, Edgbaston).*

Dixon-Hartland, Sir Frederick Dixon, Bart. *(Middlesex, Uxbridge).*

Donelan, Captain Anthony John Charles *(Cork, E.).*

Donkin, Richard Sim *(Tynemouth).*

Doogan, Patrick Charles *(Tyrone, E.).*

Dorington, Sir John Edward, Bart. *(Gloucester, Tewkesbury).*

Doughty, George *(Great Grimsby).*

Douglas-Pennant, Hon. Edward Sholto *(Northants, S.).*

Doxford, William Theodore *(Sunderland).*

Drage, Geoffrey *(Derby).*

Drucker, Charles Augustus Adolph *(Northampton).*

Duncombe, Hon. Hubert Valentine *(Cumberland, Egremont).*

Dunn, Sir William, Bart. *(Paisley).*

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir William Hart, Bart. *(Kent, Dartford).*

E.

Edwards, General Sir James Bevan, Knt. *(Hythe).*

Egerton, Hon. Alan de Tatton *(Cheshire, Knutsford).*

Ellis, John Edward *(Nottingham, Rushcliffe).*

Ellis, Thomas Edward *(Merionethshire).*

Engledow, Charles John *(Kildare, N.).*

Esmonde, Sir Thomas Henry Grattan, Bart. *(Kerry, W.).*

Evans, Samuel T. *(Glamorgan, Mid).*

Evans, Sir Francis H., Knt. *(Southampton).*

Evershed, Sydney *(Staffordshire, Burton).*

F.

Fardell, Thomas George *(Paddington, S.)*

Farquhar, Sir Horace Brand Townshend-, Bart. *(Marylebone, W.).*

Farquharson, Robert *(Aberdeenshire, W.).*

Farrell, James Patrick *(Cavan, W.).*

Farrell, Thomas Joseph *(Kerry, S.).*

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward *(Hunts, Ramsey).*

Fenwick, Charles *(Northumberland, Wansbeck)*

Ferguson, Ronald Craufurd Munro *(Leith Burghs)*.

Fergusson, Right Hon. Sir James, Bart. *(Manchester, N.E.)*.

Ffrench, Peter *(Wexford, S.)*.

Field, Admiral Edward *(Sussex, Eastbourne)*.

Field, William *(Dublin, St. Patrick)*.

Fielden, Thomas *(Lancs., S.E., Middleton)*.

Finch, George Henry *(Rutland)*.

Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold Heneage *(Notts, Newark)*.

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne, Knt. *(Inverness Burghs)*.

Finucane, John *(Limerick)*.

Firbank, Joseph Thomas *(Hull, E.)*.

Fisher, William Hayes *(Fulham)*.

Fison, Frederick William *(York, W. R., Doncaster)*.

FitzGerald, Sir Robert Uniacke Penrose, Bart. *(Cambridge)*.

FitzWygram, General Sir Frederick Wellington John, Bart. *(Hants, Fareham)*.

Flannery, James Fortescue *(York, W.R., Shipley)*.

Flavin, Michael Joseph *(Kerry, N.)*.

Fletcher, Sir Henry, Bt. *(Sussex, Lewes)*.

Flower, Ernest *(Bradford, W.)*.

Flynn, James Christopher *(Cork, N.)*.

Folkestone, Jacob Pleydell-Bouverie, Viscount *(Wilts, Wilton)*.

Forster, Henry William *(Kent, Sevenoaks)*.

Forwood, Right Hon. Sir Arthur Bower, Bart. *(Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk)*.

Foster, Colonel William Henry *(Lancashire, N., Lancaster)*.

Foster, Harry Seymour *(Suffolk, Lowestoft)*.

Foster, Sir Balthazar Walter, Knt. *(Derby, Ilkeston)*.

Fowler, Matthew *(Durham)*.

Fowler, Right Hon. Sir Henry Hartley, G.C.S.I. *(Wolverhampton, E.)*.

Fox, Joseph Francis *(King's County, Tullamore)*.

Fry, Lewis *(Bristol, N.)*

G.

Galloway, William Johnson *(Manchester, S.W.*

Garfit, William *(Boston)*.

Gedge, Sydney *(Walsall)*.

Gibbs, Hon. Alban George Henry *(London City)*.

Gibbs, Hon. Vicary *(Herts, St. Albans)*.

Gibney, James *(Meath, N.)*.

Gibson-Carmichael, Sir Thomas David, Bart. *(Edinburgh, Midlothian)*.

Giles, Charles Tyrrell *(Cambridge, Wisbech)*.

Gilhooly, James *(Cork County, W.)*.

Gilliat, John Saunders *(Lancashire, S.W., Widnes)*.

Gladstone, Right Hon. Herbert John *(Leeds, W.)*.

Goddard, Daniel Ford *(Ipswich)*.

Godson, Augustus Frederick *(Kidderminster)*.

Gold, Charles *(Essex, Saffron Walden)*.

Goldsworthy, General Walter Tuckfield *(Hammersmith)*.

Gordon, John Edward *(Elgin and Nairn)*.

Gorst, Right Hon. Sir John Eldon, Knt. *(Cambridge University)*.

Goschen, Right Hon. George Joachim *(St. George's, Hanover Square)*.

Goschen, George Joachim (Junior) *(Sussex, East Grinstead)*.

Goulding, Edward Alfred *(Wilts, Devizes)*,

Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley, Knt. *(Sunderland)*.

Graham, Henry Robert *(St. Pancras, W.)*.
Gray, Ernest *(West Ham, N.)*.
Green, Walford Davis *(Wednesbury)*.
Greene, Henry David *(Shrewsbury)*.
Greene, Walter Raymond *(Cambs, Chesterton)*.
Gretton, John (Junior) *(Derbyshire, S.)*.
Greville, Captain the Hon. Ronald Henry Fulton *(Bradford, E.)*.
Grey, Sir Edward, Bart. *(Northumberland, Berwick-upon-Tweed)*.
Grice-Hutchinson, Captain George William *(Aston Manor)*.
Griffith-Boscawen, Arthur Sackville Trevor *(Kent, Tunbridge)*.
Griffith, Ellis Jones *(Anglesey)*.
Gull, Sir William Cameron, Bart. *(Devon, Barnstaple)*.
Gully, Right Hon. William Court *(Carlisle)*.
Gunter, Colonel Robert *(York, W.R., Barkston Ash)*.

H.

Haldane, Richard Burdon *(Haddington)*.
Hall, Sir Charles, K.C.M.G. *(Finsbury, Holborn)*.
Halsey, Thomas Frederick *(Herts, Watford)*.
Hamilton, Right Hon. Lord George Francis *(Middlesex, Ealing)*.
Hammond, John *(Carlow)*.
Hamond, Sir Charles Frederick, Knt. *(Newcastle-upon-Tyne)*.
Hanbury, Right Hon. Robert William *(Preston)*.
Hanson, Sir Reginald, Bart. *(London)*.
Harcourt, Right Hon. Sir William Vernon, Knt. *(Monmouthshire, W.)*.
Hardy, Laurence *(Kent, Ashford)*.
Hare, Thomas Leigh *(Norfolk, S.W.)*.
Harrington, Timothy *(Dublin, Harbour)*.
Harrison, Charles *(Plymouth)*.
Harwood, George *(Bolton)*.
Haslett, Sir James Horner, Knt. *(Belfast, N.)*.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick George *(Lancashire, S.E., Gorton)*.
Havelock-Allan, General Sir Henry Marshman, Bart. *(Durham, S.E.)*.
Hayden, Luke Patrick *(Roscommon, S.)*.
Hazell, Walter *(Leicester)*.
Healy, Maurice *(Cork City)*.
Healy, Thomas Joseph *(Wexford, N.)*.
Healy, Timothy Michael *(Louth, N.)*.
Heath, James *(Staffordshire, N.W.)*.
Heaton, John Henniker *(Canterbury)*.
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H. *(Wick Burghs)*.
Helder, Augustus *(Whitehaven)*.
Hemphill, Right Hon. Serjeant Charles Hare *(Tyrone, N.)*.
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter *(Oxon, Henley)*.
Hickman, Sir Alfred, Knt. *(Wolverhampton, W)*.
Hill, Colonel Sir Edward Stock, K.C.B. *(Bristol, S.)*.
Hill, Right Hon. Alexander Staveley *(Staffordshire, Kingswinford)*.
Hill, Right Hon. Lord Arthur William *(Down, W.)*.
Hoare, Edward Brodie *(Hampstead)*.
Hoare, Samuel *(Norwich)*.
Hobhouse, Henry *(Somerset, E.)*.
Hogan, James Francis *(Tipperary, Mid)*.
Holburn, John Goundry *(Lanark, N.W.)*.
Holden, Angus *(York, E.R., Buckrose)*.
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh *(Tower Hamlets, Bow, E.)*.
Hopkinson, Alfred *(Wilts, Cricklade)*.
Hornby, William Henry *(Blackburn)*.
Horniman, Frederick John *(Penryn and Falmouth)*.
Houldsworth, Sir William Henry, Bart. *(Manchester, N.W.)*.
Houston, Robert Paterson *(Liverpool, West Toxteth)*.

Howard, Joseph *(Middlesex, Tottenham).*

Howell, William Tudor *(Denbigh Boroughs).*

Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle, K.C.I.E. *Salford, S.).*

Hozier, James Henry Cecil *(Lanark, S.).*

Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn *(Lambeth, Brixton).*

Hudson, George Bickersteth *(Herts, Hitchin).*

Hughes, Colonel Edwin *(Woolwich).*

Hulse, Edward Henry *(Salisbury).*

Humphreys-Owen, Arthur Charles *(Montgomeryshire).*

Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager, Bart. *(Maidstone).*

Hutton, Alfred Eddison *(York, W.R., Morley).*

Hutton, John *(Yorkshire, Richmond).*

I.

Isaacson, Frederick Wootton *(Tower Hamlets, Stepney).*

J

Jackson, Right Hon. William Laweis *(Leeds, N.).*

Jacoby, James Alfred *(Derbyshire, Mid).*

Jameson, Major James Eustace *(Clare, W.).*

Jebb, Richard Claverhouse *(Cambridge University).*

Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick *(Hants, Basingstoke).*

Jenkins, Sir John Jones, Knt. *(Carmarthen Boroughs).*

Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton *(St. Pancras, S.).*

Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edward *(Leicester, Loughborough).*

Johnston, William *(Belfast, S.).*

Johnstone, John Heywood *(Sussex, Horsham).*

Joicey, Sir James, Bart. *(Durham, Chester-le-Street).*

Jolliffe, Hon. Hylton George Hylton *(Somerset, Wells).*

Jones, David Brynmor *(Swansea District).*

Jones, William *(Carnarvon, Arfon).*

Jordan, Jeremiah *(Fermanagh, S.).*

K.

Kay-Shuttleworth, Right. Hon. Sir Ughtred James, Bart. *(Lancashire, N.E., Clitheroe).*

Kearley, Hudson Ewbanke *(Devonport)*

Kemp, George *(Lancashire, S.E., Heywood).*

Kennaway, Right Hon. Sir John Henry, Bart. *(Devon, Honiton).*

Kenny, William *(Dublin, St. Stephen's Green).*

Kenrick, William *(Birmingham, N.).*

Kenyon, James *(Bury, Lancashire).*

Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel William *(Shropshire, Newport).*

Kilbride, Denis *(Galway, N.).*

Kimber, Henry *(Wandsworth).*

King, Sir Henry Seymour, K.C.I.E. *(Hull, Central).*

Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth, Bart. *(Perthshire, E.).*

Kitson, Sir James, Bart. *(York, W.R., Colne Valley).*

Knowles, Lees *(Salford, W.)*

Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey *(Londonderry).*

L.

Labouchere, Henry *(Northampton).*

Lafone, Alfred *(Southwark, Bermondsey).*

Lambert, George *(Devon, South Molton).*

Langley, Batty *(Sheffield, Attercliffe).*

Laurie, General John William *(Pembroke and Haverfordwest).*

Lawrence, Edwin *(Cornwall, Truro).*

Lawrence, William Frederick *(Liverpool, Abercromby).*

Lawson, John Grant *(Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk and Malton).*

Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, Bart. *(Cumberland, Cockermouth).*

Lea, Sir Thomas, Bart. *(Londonderry, S.).*

Lecky, William Edward Hartpole *(Dublin University).*

Lees, Sir Elliott, Bart *(Birkenhead).*

Leese, Sir Joseph Francis, Knt. *(Lancashire, N.E., Accrington).*

Legh, Right Hon. Thomas Wodehouse *(Lancashire, S.W., Newton).*

Leighton, Stanley *(Shropshire, Oswestry).*

Leng, Sir John, Knt. *(Dundee).*

Leuty, Thomas Richmond *(Leeds, E.).*

Lewis, John Herbert *(Flint Boroughs).*

Llewellyn, Evan Henry *(Somerset, N.).*

Llewelyn, Sir John Thomas Dillwyn, Bart. *(Swansea Town).*

Lloyd-George, David *(Carnarvon).*

Lockwood, Colonel Amelius Richard Mark *(Essex, Epping).*

Lockwood, Sir Frank, Knt. *(York City).*

Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine *(Brighton).*

Logan, John William *(Leicester, Harborough).*

Long, Colonel Charles Wigram *(Worcestershire, Evesham).*

Long, Right Hon. Walter Hume *(Liverpool, West Derby).*

Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller *(Grantham).*

Lorne, Right Hon. John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, Marquess of *(Manchester, S.).*

Lough, Thomas *(Islington, W.).*

Lowles, John *(Shoreditch, Haggerston).*

Lowther, James William *(Cumberland, Penrith).*

Lowther, Right Hon. James *(Kent, Isle of Thanet).*

Loyd, Archie Kirkman *(Berks, Abingdon).*

Lubbock, Right Hon. Sir John, Bart. *(London University).*

Lucas-Shadwell, William *(Hastings).*

Luttrell, Hugh Courtenay Fownes *(Devon, Tavistock).*

Lyell, Sir Leonard, Bart. *(Orkney and Shetland).*

Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred *(Warwick and Leamington).*

M.

Macaleese, Daniel *(Monaghan, N.).*

McArthur, William Alexander *(Cornwall, St. Austell).*

Macartney, William Grey Ellison *(Antrim, S.).*

McCalmont, Captain James Martin *(Antrim, E.).*

McCalmont, Colonel Hugh *(Antrim, N.).*

McCalmont, Harry Leslie Blundell *(Cambridge, Newmarket).*

McCartan, Michael *(Down, S.).*

McCarthy, Justin *(Longford, N.).*

McDermott, Patrick *(Kilkenny, N.).*

Macdona, John Cumming *(Southwark, Rotherhithe).*

McDonnell, Marc Antony *(Queen's County, Leix).*

McEwan, William *(Edinburgh, Central).*

McGhee, Richard *(Louth, S.).*

M'Hugh, Edward *(Armagh, S.).*

M'Hugh, Patrick Aloysius *(Leitrim, N.).*

McIver, Sir Lewis, Bart. *(Edinburgh, W.).*

McKenna, Reginald *(Monmouth, N.).*

McKillop, James *(Stirlingshire).*

McLaren, Charles Benjamin Bright *(Leicester, Bosworth).*

Maclean, James Mackenzie *(Cardiff).*

McLeod, John *(Sutherland).*

Maclure, John William *(Lancashire, S.E., Stretford).*

MacNeill, John Gordon Swift *(Donegal, S.).*

Maden, John Henry *(Lancashire, N.E., Rossendale).*

Malcolm, Ian Zachary *(Suffolk, Stowmarket)*.

Mandeville, Francis *(Tipperary, S.)*.

Manners, Lord Edward William John *(Leicestershire, Melton)*.

Maple, Sir John Blundell, Knt. *(Camberwell, Dulwich)*.

Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe, Bart., *(York, W. R., Hallamshire)*.

Marks, Harry Hananel *(Tower Hamlets, St. George's)*.

Martin, Richard Biddulph *(Worcester, Droitwich)*.

Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. William Frederick Barton *(Finsbury, Central)*.

Maxwell, Sir Herbert Eustace, Bart. *(Wigtownshire)*.

Mellor, Colonel John James *(Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth)*.

Mellor, Right Hon. John William *(York, W.R., Sowerby)*.

Melville, Beresford Valentine *(Stockport)*.

Meysey-Thompson, Sir Henry Meysey, Bart. *(Stafford, Handsworth)*.

Milbank, Powlett Charles John *(Radnorshire)*.

Mildmay, Francis Bingham *(Devon, Totnes)*.

Milner, Sir Frederick George, Bart. *(Notts, Bassetlaw)*.

Milton, William Charles de Mure Fitzwilliam, Viscount *(Wakefield)*.

Milward, Colonel Victor *(Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon)*.

Minch, Matthew Joseph *(Kildare, S.)*.

Molloy, Bernard Charles *(King's Co., Birr)*.

Monckton, Edward Philip *(Northamptonshire, N.)*.

Monk, Charles James *(Gloucester)*.

Montagu, Hon. John Walter Edward Douglas Scott- *(Hants, New Forest)*

Montagu, Sir Samuel, Bart. *(Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel)*.

Moon, Edward Robert Pacy *(St. Pancras, N.)*.

More, Robert Jasper *(Shropshire, Ludlow)*.

Morgan, Colonel the Hon. Frederick Courtenay *(Monmouthshire, S.)*.

Morgan, Right Hon. Sir George Osborne, Bart. *(Denbighshire, E.)*.

Morgan, John Lloyd *(Carmarthen, W.)*.

Morgan, William Pritchard *(Merthyr Tydvil)*.

Morley, Charles *(Brecknock)*.

Morley, Right Hon. John *(Montrose Burghs)*.

Morrell, George Herbert *(Oxon, Woodstock)*.

Morris, Samuel *(Kilkenny, S.)*.

Morrison, Walter *(York, W.R., Skipton)*.

Morton, Edward John Chalmers *(Devonport)*.

Mount, William George *(Berks, Newbury)*.

Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir John Robert, Bart. *(Oxford University)*.

Mundella, Right Hon. Anthony John *(Sheffield, Brightside)*.

Muntz, Philip Albert *(Warwickshire, Tamworth)*.

Murdoch, Charles Townsend *(Reading)*

Murnaghan, George *(Tyrone, Mid)*.

Murray, Charles James *(Coventry)*.

Murray, Colonel Charles Wyndham *(Bath)*.

Murray, Right Hon. Andrew Graham *(Buteshire)*.

Myers, William Henry *(Winchester)*.

N.

Newdigate, Francis Alexander *(Warwickshire, Nuneaton)*.

Nicol, Donald Ninian *(Argyllshire)*.

Northcote, Hon. Sir Henry Stafford, Bart. *(Exeter)*.

Norton, Captain Cecil William (*Newington, W.*).

Nussey, Thomas Willans (*Pontefract*).

O.

O'Brien, James Francis Xavier (*Cork City*).

O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*).

O'Brien, Patrick Joseph (*Tipperary, N.*).

O'Connor, Arthur (*Donegal, E.*).

O'Connor, James (*Wicklow, W.*).

O'Connor, Thomas Power (*Liverpool, Scotland*).

O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur (*Limerick*).

O'Kelly, James (*Roscommon, N.*).

Oldroyd, Mark (*Dewsbury*).

O'Malley, William (*Galway, Connemara*).

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens (*Antrim, Mid*).

Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay (*Ayr Burghs*).

Oswald, James Francis (*Oldham*).

Owen, Thomas (*Cornwall, Launceston*).

P.

Palmer, Colonel James Dampier (*Gravesend*).

Palmer, Sir Charles Mark, Bart. (*Durham, Jarrow*).

Parkes, Ebenezer (*Birmingham, Central*)

Parnell, John Howard (*Meath, S.*).

Paulton, James Mellor (*Durham, Bishop Auckland*).

Pearson, Sir Weetman Dickinson, Bart. (*Colchester*).

Pease, Alfred Edward (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*).

Pease, Arthur (*Darlington*)

Pease, Joseph Albert (*Northumberland, Tyneside*).

Pease, Sir Joseph Whitwell, Bart. (*Durham, Barnard Castle*).

Pender, James (*Northants, Mid*).

Penn, John (*Lewisham*).

Perks, Robert William (*Lincolnshire, Louth*).

Phillpotts, Captain Arthur Stephens (*Devon, Torquay*).

Pickard, Benjamin (*Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton*).

Pickersgill, Edward Hare (*Bethnal Green, S.W.*).

Pierpoint, Robert (*Warrington*).

Pinkerton, John (*Galway*).

Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon (*Aberdeen, N.*).

Platt-Higgins, Frederick (*Salford, N.*).

Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon (*Dublin County, S.*).

Pollock, Harry Frederick (*Lincoln, Spalding*).

Powell, Sir Francis Sharp, Bart. (*Wigan*).

Power, Patrick Joseph (*Waterford, E.*).

Pretyman, Captain Ernest George (*Suffolk, Woodbridge*).

Price, Robert John (*Norfolk, E.*).

Priestley, Briggs (*York, W.R., Pudsey*).

Priestley, Sir William Overend, Knt. (*Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities*).

Provand, Andrew Dryburgh (*Glasgow, Blackfriars*).

Pryce-Jones, Edward (*Montgomery Boroughs*).

Purvis, Robert (*Peterborough*).

Pym, Charles Guy (*Bedford*).

Q.

Quilter, William Cuthbert (*Suffolk, Sudbury*)

R.

Randell, David (*Glamorgan, Gower*).

Rankin, James (*Herefordshire, Leominster*).

Rasch, Major Frederic Carne (*Essex, S.E.*).

Reckitt, Harold James *(Lincolnshire, Brigg).*

Redmond, John Edward *(Waterford).*

Redmond, William Hoey Kearney *(Clare, E.).*

Reid, Sir Robert Threshie, Knt. *(Dumfries Burghs).*

Renshaw, Charles Bine *(Renfrew, W.)*

Rentoul, James Alexander *(Down, E.).*

Richards, Henry Charles *(Finsbury, E.).*

Richardson, Thomas *(Hartlepool).*

Rickett, Joseph Compton *(Scarborough).*

Ridley, Right Hon. Sir Matthew White, Bart. *(Lancashire, N., Blackpool).*

Ritchie, Right Hon. Charles Thomson *(Croydon).*

Roberts, John Bryn *(Carnarvonshire, Eifion).*

Roberts, John Herbert *(Denbigh, W.).*

Robertson, Edmund *(Dundee.)*

Robertson, Thomas Herbert *(Hackney, S.).*

Robinson, Brooke *(Dudley).*

Robson, William Snowdon *(South Shields).*

Roche, Hon. James B. Burke *(Kerry, E.).*

Roche, John *(Galway, E.).*

Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye, Knt. *(Islington, S.).*

Rothschild, Baron Ferdinand James de *(Bucks, Aylesbury).*

Round, James *(Essex, Harwich).*

Royds, Clement Molyneux *(Rochdale).*

Russell, General Francis Shirley *(Cheltenham).*

Russell, Sir George, Bart. *(Berkshire, Wokingham).*

Russell, Thomas Wallace *(Tyrone, S.).*

Rutherford, John *(Lancashire, N.E., Darwen).*

S.

Samuel, Harry Simeon *(Tower Hamlets, Limehouse).*

Samuel, Jonathan *(Stockton-on-Tees)*

Sandys, Colonel Thomas Myles *(Lancashire, S.W., Bootle).*

Saunderson, Colonel Edward James *(Armagh, N.).*

Savory, Sir Joseph, Bart. *(Westmorland, Appleby).*

Schwann, Charles Ernest *(Manchester, N.).*

Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard, K.C.S.I. *(Hackney, Central).*

Scott, Charles Prestwich *(Lancashire, S.W., Leigh).*

Seale-Hayne, Right Hon. Charles *(Devon, Ashburton.)*

Seely, Charles Hilton *(Lincoln).*

Seton-Karr, Henry *(St. Helens).*

Sharpe, William Edward Thompson *(Kensington, N.).*

Shaw, Charles Edward *(Stafford).*

Shaw, Thomas *(Hawick Burghs).*

Shaw, William Rawson *(Halifax).*

Shaw-Stewart, Michael Hugh *(Renfrewshire, E.).*

Shee, James John *(Waterford, W,).*

Sheehy, David *(Galway, S.).*

Sidebotham, Joseph Watson *(Cheshire, Hyde).*

Sidebottom, Tom Harrop *(Stalybridge).*

Sidebottom, William *(Derbyshire, High Peak).*

Simeon, Sir John Stephen Barrington, Bart. *(Southampton).*

Skewes-Cox, Thomas *(Surrey, Kingston).*

Smith, Abel *(Herts, Hertford).*

Smith, Abel Henry *(Christchurch).*

Smith-Barry, Right Hon. Arthur H. *(Hunts, Huntingdon).*

Smith, Hon. William Frederic Danvers *(Strand, Westminster).*

Smith, James Parker *(Lanark, Partick).*

Smith, Samuel *(Flintshire).*

Souttar, Robinson *(Dumfriesshire).*

Spencer, Ernest *(West Bromwich).*

Spicer, Albert *(Monmouth Boroughs).*

Stanhope, Hon. Philip James *(Burnley).*

Stanley, Edward George Villiers, Lord *(Lancashire, N.E., Westhoughton).*

Stanley, Edward James *(Somerset, Bridgwater).*

Stanley, Henry Morton *(Lambeth, N.).*

Stephens, Henry Charles *(Middlesex, Hornsey).*

Stevenson, Francis Seymour *(Suffolk, Eye).*

Stewart, Sir Mark John McTaggart, Bart. *(Kirkcudbright).*

Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John Maxwell, Bart. *(Glasgow, College).*

Stock, James Henry *(Liverpool, Walton).*

Stone, Sir John Benjamin, Bart. *(Birmingham, E.).*

Strachey, Edward *(Somerset, S.).*

Strauss, Arthur *(Cornwall, Camborne).*

Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley *(Essex, Maldon).*

Stuart, James *(Shoreditch, Hoxton).*

Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier *(Dorset, E.).*

Sullivan, Donal *(Westmeath, S.).*

Sullivan, Timothy Daniel *(Donegal, E.).*

Sutherland, Sir Thomas, K.C.M.G. *(Greenock).*

T.

Talbot, John Gilbert *(Oxford University).*

Talbot, Lord Edmund Bernard *(Sussex, Chichester).*

Tanner, Charles Kearns Deane *(Cork County, Mid.).*

Taylor, Francis *(Norfolk, S.).*

Tennant, Harold John *(Berwickshire.)*

Thomas, Abel *(Carmarthen, E.).*

Thomas, Alfred *(Glamorgan, E.).*

Thomas, David Alfred *(Merthyr Tydvil).*

Thorburn, Walter *(Peebles and Selkirk).*

Thornton, Percy Melville *(Clapham).*

Tollemache, Henry James *(Cheshire, Eddisbury).*

Tomlinson, William Edward Murray *(Preston).*

Trevelyan, Right Hon. Sir George Otto, Bart. *(Glasgow, Bridgeton).*

Tritton, Charles Ernest *(Lambeth, Norwood).*

Tuite, James *(Westmeath, N.)*

Tully, Jasper *(Leitrim, S.).*

U.

Ure, Alexander *(Linlithgow).*

Usborne, Thomas *(Essex, Chelmsford).*

V.

Valentia, Sir Arthur Annesley, Viscount *(Oxford).*

Verney, Hon. Richard Greville *(Warwickshire, Rugby).*

Villiers, Right Hon. Charles Pelham *(Wolverhampton. S.).*

Vincent, Colonel Sir Charles Edward Howard, Knt. *(Sheffield, Central).*

W.

Wallace, Robert *(Edinburgh, E.).*

Wallace, Robert *(Perth).*

Walrond, Sir William Hood, Bart. *(Devon, Tiverton).*

Walton, John Lawson *(Leeds, S.).*

Wanklyn, James Leslie *(Bradford, Central).*

Ward, Hon. Robert Arthur *(Cheshire, Crewe).*

Warde, Colonel Charles Edward *(Kent, Medway).*

Waring, Colonel Thomas *(Down, N.).*

Warkworth, Lord *(Kensington, S.).*

Warner, Thomas Courtenay Theydon *(Stafford, Lichfield).*

Warr, Augustus Frederick *(Liverpool, E. Toxteth).*

Wayman, Thomas *(York, W.R., Elland).*

Webster, Robert Grant *(St. Pancras, E.).*

Webster, Sir Richard E., G.C.M.G. *(Isle of Wight).*

Wedderburn, Sir William, Bart. *(Banffshire).*

Weir, James Galloway *(Ross and Cromarty).*

Welby, Colonel Alfred Cholmeley Earle- *(Taunton).*

Wentworth, Bruce Canning Vernon- *(Brighton).*

Wharton, John Lloyd *(York, W.R., Ripon).*

Whiteley, George *(Stockport).*

Whiteley, Herbert *(Ashton-under-Lyne).*

Whitmore, Charles Algernon *(Chelsea).*

Whittaker, Thomas Palmer *(York, W.R., Spen Valley).*

Wickham, William *(Hants, Petersfield).*

Wigram, Alfred Money *(Essex, Romford).*

Williams, Colonel Robert *(Dorset, W.).*

Williams, John Carvell *(Notts, Mansfield).*

Williams, Joseph Powell- *(Birmingham, S.).*

Willoughby de Eresby, Gilbert Heathcote Drummond-Willoughby, Lord *(Lincolnshire, Horncastle).*

Willox, John Archibald *(Liverpool, Everton).*

Wills, Sir William Henry, Bart. *(Bristol, E.).*

Wilson, Charles Henry *(Hull, W.).*

Wilson, Frederick William *(Norfolk, Mid).*

Wilson, Henry Joseph *(York, W.R., Holmfirth).*

Wilson, John *(Durham, Mid).*

Wilson, John *(Falkirk Burghs).*

Wilson, John *(Lanark, Govan).*

Wilson, John William *(Worcester, N.).*

Wilson, Joseph Havelock *(Middlesbrough).*

Wilson-Todd, William Henry *(York, N.R., Howdenshire).*

Wingfield-Digby, John Kenelm *(Dorset, N.).*

Wodehouse, Edmond Robert *(Bath).*

Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm *(Belfast, E.).*

Woodall, William *(Hanley).*

Woodhouse, Sir James Thomas, Knt. *(Huddersfield).*

Wortley, Right Hon. Charles Beilby Stuart- *(Sheffield, Hallam).*

Wylie, Alexander *(Dumbartonshire).*

Wyndham, George *(Dover).*

Wyndham-Quin, Major Wyndham Henry *(Glamorgan, S.).*

Wyvill, Marmaduke d'Arcy *(York, W.R., Otley).*

Y.

Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong *(Chester).*

Young, Samuel *(Cavan, E.).*

Younger, William *(Lincolnshire, Stamford).*

Yoxall, James Henry *(Nottingham, W.).*

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CONSTITUENCIES REPRESENTED,

WITH

NAMES OF MEMBERS RETURNED.

(Compiled at the Opening of the Session.)

ENGLAND—465 Members.

BEDFORDSHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR BIGGLESWADE) DIVISION.
Lord Alwyne Frederick Compton.

SOUTHERN (OR LUTON) DIVISION.
Thomas Gair Ashton.

BEDFORD BOROUGHS.
Charles Guy Pym.

BERKSHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR ABINGDON) DIVISION.
Archie Kirkman Loyd.

SOUTHERN (OR NEWBURY) DIVISION.
William George Mount.

EASTERN (OR WOKINGHAM) DIVISION.
Sir George Russell, Bart.

READING BOROUGH.
Charles Townsend Murdoch.

WINDSOR (NEW) BOROUGH.
Francis Tress Barry.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR BUCKINGHAM) DIVISION.
William Walter Carlile.

MID (OR AYLESBURY) DIVISION.
Baron Ferdinand James de Rothschild.

SOUTHERN (OR WYCOMBE) DIVISION.
George Richard Penn Viscount Curzon.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR WISBECH) DIVISION.
Charles Tyrrell Giles.

WESTERN (OR CHESTERTON) DIVISION.
Walter Raymond Greene.

EASTERN (OR NEWMARKET) DIVISION.
Harry Leslie Blundell McCalmont.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.
Richard Claverhouse Jebb.
Right Hon. Sir John Eldon Gorst, Knt.

CAMBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Sir Robert Uniacke Penrose FitzGerald, Bart.

CHESHIRE.

WIRRAL DIVISION.
Colonel Edward Thomas Davenant Cotton-Jodrell.

EDDISBURY DIVISION.
Henry James Tollemache.

MACCLESFIELD DIVISION.
William Bromley Davenport.

CREWE DIVISION.
Hon. Robert Arthur Ward.

NORTHWICH DIVISION.
Sir John Tomlinson Brunner, Bart.

ALTRINCHAM DIVISION.
Coningsby Ralph Disraeli.

CHESHIRE—*cont.*

HYDE DIVISION.
Joseph Watson Sidebotham.

KNUTSFORD DIVISION.
Hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton.

BIRKENHEAD BOROUGH.
Sir Elliott Lees, Bart.

CHESTER CITY.
Robert Armstrong Yerburgh.

STOCKPORT BOROUGH.
George Whiteley.
Beresford Valentine Melville.

CORNWALL.

WESTERN (OR ST. IVES) DIVISION.
Thomas Bedford Bolitho.

NORTH-WESTERN (OR CAMBORNE) DIVISION.
Arthur Strauss.

TRURO DIVISION.
Edwin Lawrence.

MID (OR ST. AUSTELL) DIVISION.
William Alexander McArthur.

SOUTH-EASTERN (OR BODMIN) DIVISION.
Right Hon. Leonard Henry Courtney.

NORTH-EASTERN (OR LAUNCESTON) DIVISION.
Thomas Owen.

PENRYN AND FALMOUTH BOROUGH.
Frederick John Horniman.

CUMBERLAND.

NORTHERN (OR ESKDALE) DIVISION.
Robert Andrew Allison.

MID (OR PENRITH) DIVISION.
James William Lowther.

COCKERMOUTH DIVISION.
Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bart.

WESTERN (OR EGREMONT) DIVISION.
Hon. Hubert Valentine Duncombe.

CARLISLE CITY.
Right Hon. William Court Gully.

WHITEHAVEN BOROUGH.
Augustus Helder.

DERBYSHIRE.

HIGH PEAK DIVISION.
Captain William Sidebottom.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION.
Thomas Dolling Bolton.

CHESTERFIELD DIVISION.
Thomas Bayley.

WESTERN DIVISION.
Victor Christian William Cavendish.

MID DIVISION.
James Alfred Jacoby.

ILKESTON DIVISION.
Sir Balthazar Walter Foster, Knt.

SOUTHERN DIVISION.
John Gretton (Junior).

DERBY BOROUGH.
Henry Howe Bemrose.
Geoffrey Drage.

DEVONSHIRE.

EASTERN (OR HONITON) DIVISION.
Right Hon. Sir John Henry Kennaway, Bart.

NORTH-EASTERN (OR TIVERTON) DIVISION.
Colonel Sir William Hood Walrond, Bart.

NORTHERN (OR SOUTH MOLTON) DIVISION.
George Lambert.

NORTH-WESTERN (OR BARNSTAPLE) DIVISION.
Sir William Cameron Gull, Bart.

WESTERN (OR TAVISTOCK) DIVISION.
Hugh Courtenay Fownes Luttrell.

SOUTH (OR TOTNES) DIVISION.
Francis Bingham Mildmay.

TORQUAY DIVISION.
Captain Arthur Stephens Phillpotts.

MID (OR ASHBURTON) DIVISION.
Right Hon. Charles Seale-Hayne.

DEVONPORT BOROUGH.
Hudson Ewbanke Kearley.
Edward John Chalmers Morton.

Devonshire—*cont.*

EXETER CITY.

Hon. Sir Henry Stafford Northcote, Bart.

PLYMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir Edward George Clarke, Knt.
Charles Harrison.

DORSETSHIRE.

Northern Division.

John Kenelm Digby Wingfield-Digby.

Eastern Division.

Hon. Humphrey Napier Sturt.

Southern Division.

William Ernest Brymer.

Western Division.

Colonel Robert Williams.

DURHAM.

Jarrow Division.

Sir Charles Mark Palmer, Bart.

Houghton-le-Spring Division.

Robert Cameron.

Chester-le-Street Division.

Sir James Joicey, Bart.

North-western Division.

Llewellyn Archer Atherley-Jones.

Mid Division.

John Wilson.

South-eastern Division.

General Sir Henry Marshman Havelock-Allan, Bart.

Bishop Auckland Division.

James Mellor Paulton.

Barnard Castle Division.

Sir Joseph Whitwell Pease, Bart.

DARLINGTON BOROUGH.

Arthur Pease.

DURHAM CITY.

Matthew Fowler.

GATESHEAD BOROUGH.

William Allan.

HARTLEPOOLS (THE) BOROUGH.

Thomas Richardson.

SOUTH SHIELDS BOROUGH.

William Snowdon Robson.

Durham—*cont.*

STOCKTON BOROUGH.

Jonathan Samuel.

SUNDERLAND BOROUGH.

William Theodore Doxford.
Colonel Sir Edward Temperley Gourley, Knt.

ESSEX.

South-western (or Walthamstow) Division.

Edmund Widdrington Byrne.

Southern (or Romford) Division.

Alfred Money Wigram.

Western (or Epping) Division.

Colonel Amelius Richard Mark Lockwood.

Northern (or Saffron Walden) Division.

Charles Gold.

North-eastern (or Harwich) Division.

James Round.

Eastern (or Maldon) Division.

Hon. Charles Hedley Strutt.

Mid (or Chelmsford) Division.

Thomas Usborne.

South-eastern Division.

Major Frederic Carne Rasch.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH.

Sir Weetman Dickinson Pearson, Bart.

WEST HAM BOROUGH.

North Division.

Ernest Gray.

South Division.

Major George Edward Banes.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Mid (or Stroud) Division.

Charles Alfred Cripps.

Northern (or Tewkesbury) Division.

Sir John Edward Dorington, Bart.

Eastern (or Cirencester) Division.

Hon. Allen Benjamin Bathurst.

Gloucestershire—*cont.*

Forest of Dean Division.

Right Hon. Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Bart.

Southern (or Thornbury) Division.

Charles Edward Hungerford Athole Colston.

BRISTOL BOROUGH.

West Division.

Right Hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks Beach, Bart.

North Division.

Lewis Fry.

East Division.

Sir William Henry Wills, Bart.

South Division.

Colonel Sir Edward Stock Hill, K.C.B.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH.

General Francis Shirley Russell.

GLOUCESTER CITY.

Charles James Monk.

HAMPSHIRE.

Northern (or Basingstoke) Division.

Arthur Frederick Jeffreys.

Western (or Andover) Division.

William Wither Bramston Beach.

Eastern (or Petersfield) Division.

William Wickham.

Southern (or Fareham) Division.

General Sir Frederick Wellington John FitzWygram, Bart.

New Forest Division.

Hon. John Walter Edward Douglas Scott-Montagu.

CHRISTCHURCH BOROUGH.

Abel Henry Smith.

PORTSMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir John Baker, Knt.
Walter Owen Clough.

SOUTHAMPTON BOROUGH.

Sir Francis H. Evans, K.C.M.G.
Sir John Stephen Barrington Simeon, Bart.

WINCHESTER CITY.

William Henry Myers.

ISLE OF WIGHT.

Sir Richard Everard Webster, Knt.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Northern (or Leominster) Division.

James Rankin.

Southern (or Ross) Division.

Michael Biddulph

HEREFORD CITY.

Charles Wallwyn Radcliffe Cooke.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

Northern (or Hitchin) Division.

George Bickersteth Hudson.

Eastern (or Hertford) Division.

Abel Smith.

Mid (or St. Albans) Division.

Hon. Vicary Gibbs.

Western (or Watford) Division.

Thomas Frederick Halsey.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Southern (or Huntingdon) Division.

Right Hon. Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry.

Northern (or Ramsey) Division.

Hon. Ailwyn Edward Fellowes.

KENT.

Western (or Sevenoaks) Division.

Henry William Forster.

North-western (or Dartford) Division.

Right Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, Bart.

South-western (or Tunbridge) Division.

Arthur Sackville Trevor Griffith-Boscawen.

Mid (or Medway) Division.

Colonel Charles Edward Warde.

North-eastern (or Faversham) Division.

Frederick Gorell Barnes.

Southern (or Ashford) Division.

Laurence Hardy.

Eastern (or St. Augustine's) Division.

Right Hon. Aretas Akers-Douglas.

Isle of Thanet Division.

Right Hon. James Lowther

KENT—*cont.*

CANTERBURY CITY.

John Henniker Heaton.

CHATHAM BOROUGH.

Horatio David Davies.

DEPTFORD BOROUGH.

Charles John Darling.

DOVER BOROUGH.

George Wyndham.

GRAVESEND BOROUGH.

Colonel James Dampier Palmer.

GREENWICH BOROUGH.

Lord Hugh Richard Heathcote Cecil.

HYTHE BOROUGH.

General Sir James Bevan Edwards, K.C.M.G.

LEWISHAM BOROUGH.

John Penn.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH.

Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, Bart.

ROCHESTER CITY.

James Edward Hubert Gascoyne Cecil Viscount Cranborne.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH.

Colonel Edwin Hughes.

LANCASHIRE.

North Lancashire.

NORTH LONSDALE DIVISION.

Richard Frederick Cavendish.

LANCASTER DIVISION.

Colonel William Henry Foster.

BLACKPOOL DIVISION.

Right Hon. Sir Matthew White Ridley, Bart.

CHORLEY DIVISION.

David Alexander Edward Lindsay, Earl of Balcarres.

North-east Lancashire.

DARWEN DIVISION.

John Rutherford.

CLITHEROE DIVISION.

Right Hon. Sir Ughtred James Kay-Shuttleworth, Bart.

ACCRINGTON DIVISION.

Sir Joseph Francis Leese, Knt.

ROSSENDALE DIVISION.

John Henry Maden.

LANCASHIRE—*cont.*

South-east Lancashire.

WESTHOUGHTON DIVISION.

Edward George Villiers Lord Stanley.

HEYWOOD DIVISION.

George Kemp.

MIDDLETON DIVISION.

Thomas Fielden.

RADCLIFFE-CUM-FARNWORTH DIVISION.

Colonel John James Mellor.

ECCLES DIVISION.

Octavius Leigh Clare.

STRETFORD DIVISION.

John William Maclure.

GORTON DIVISION.

Ernest Frederic George Hatch.

PRESTWICH DIVISION.

Frederick Cawley.

South-west Lancashire.

SOUTHPORT DIVISION.

Right Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon.

ORMSKIRK DIVISION.

Right Hon. Sir Arthur Bower Forwood, Bart.

BOOTLE DIVISION.

Colonel Thomas Myles Sandys.

WIDNES DIVISION.

John Saunders Gilliat.

NEWTON DIVISION.

Right Hon. Thomas Wodehouse Legh.

INCE DIVISION.

Colonel Henry Blundell-Hollinshead Blundell.

LEIGH DIVISION.

Charles Prestwich Scott.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE BOROUGH.

Herbert James Whiteley.

BARROW-IN-FURNESS BOROUGH.

Charles William Cayzer.

BLACKBURN BOROUGH.

William Henry Hornby.

Sir William Coddington, Bart.

BOLTON BOROUGH.

Herbert Shepherd-Cross.

George Harwood.

LANCASHIRE—*cont.*

BURNLEY BOROUGH.
Hon. Philip James Stanhope.

BURY BOROUGH.
James Kenyon.

LIVERPOOL CITY.
Kirkdale Division.
Sir George Smyth Baden-Powell, K.C.M.G.

Walton Division.
James Henry Stock.

Everton Division.
John Archibald Willox.

West Derby Division.
Right Hon. Walter Hume Long.

Scotland Division.
Thomas Power O'Connor.

Exchange Division.
John Charles Bigham.

Abercromby Division.
William Frederic Lawrence.

East Toxteth Division.
Augustus Frederick Warr.

West Toxteth Division.
Robert Paterson Houston.

MANCHESTER CITY.
North-west Division.
Sir William Henry Houldsworth, Bart.

North Division.
Charles Ernest Schwann.

North-east Division.
Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, Bart.

East Division.
Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.

South Division.
Right Hon. John Douglas Sutherland Campbell Marquess of Lorne.

South-west Division.
William Johnson Galloway.

OLDHAM BOROUGH.
Robert Ascroft.
James Francis Oswald.

PRESTON BOROUGH.
Right Hon. Robert William Hanbury.
William Edward Murray Tomlinson.

ROCHDALE BOROUGH.
Colonel Clement Molyneux Royds.

LANCASHIRE—*cont.*

SALFORD BOROUGH.
North Division.
Frederick Platt-Higgins.

West Division.
Lees Knowles.

South Division.
Sir Henry Hoyle Howorth, K.C.I.E.

ST. HELENS BOROUGH.
Henry Seton-Karr.

STALYBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Tom Harrop Sidebottom.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH.
Robert Pierpoint.

WIGAN BOROUGH.
Sir Francis Sharp Powell, Bart.

LEICESTERSHIRE.

EASTERN (OR MELTON) DIVISION.
Lord Edward William Manners.

MID (OR LOUGHBOROUGH) DIVISION.
Jabez Edward Johnson-Ferguson.

WESTERN (OR BOSWORTH) DIVISION.
Charles Benjamin Bright McLaren.

SOUTHERN (OR HARBOROUGH) DIVISION.
John William Logan.

LEICESTER BOROUGH.
Henry Broadhurst.
Walter Hazell.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

WEST LINDSEY (OR GAINSBOROUGH) DIVISION.
Emerson Bainbridge.

NORTH LINDSEY (OR BRIGG) DIVISION.
Harold James Reckitt.

EAST LINDSEY (OR LOUTH) DIVISION.
Robert William Perks.

SOUTH LINDSEY (OR HORNCASTLE) DIVISION.
Gilbert Heathcote Drummond-Willoughby Lord Willoughby de Eresby

NORTH KESTEVEN (OR SLEAFORD) DIVISION.
Right Hon. Henry Chaplin.

LINCOLNSHIRE—*cont.*

SOUTH KESTEVEN (OR STAMFORD) DIVISION.

William Younger.

HOLLAND (OR SPALDING) DIVISION.

Harry Frederick Pollock.

BOSTON BOROUGH.

William Garfit.

GRANTHAM BOROUGH.

Henry Yarde Buller Lopes.

GREAT GRIMSBY BOROUGH

George Doughty.

LINCOLN CITY.

Charles Hilton Seely.

MIDDLESEX.

ENFIELD DIVISION.

Major Henry Ferriman Bowles.

TOTTENHAM DIVISION.

Joseph Howard.

HORNSEY DIVISION.

Henry Charles Stephens.

HARROW DIVISION.

William Ambrose.

EALING DIVISION.

Right Hon. Lord George Francis Hamilton.

BRENTFORD DIVISION.

James Bigwood.

UXBRIDGE DIVISION.

Sir Frederick Dixon Dixon-Hartland, Bart.

BETHNAL GREEN BOROUGH.

North-east Division.

Mancherjee Merwanjee Bhownaggree.

South-west Division.

Edward Hare Pickersgill.

CHELSEA BOROUGH.

Charles Algernon Whitmore.

FINSBURY BOROUGH.

Holborn Division.

Sir Charles Hall, K.C.M.G.

Central Division.

Hon. William Frederick Barton Massey-Mainwaring.

East Division.

Henry Charles Richards.

MIDDLESEX—*cont.*

FULHAM BOROUGH

William Hayes Fisher.

HACKNEY BOROUGH.

North Division.

William Robert Bousfield.

Central Division.

Sir Andrew Richard Scoble, K.C.S.I.

South Division.

Thomas Herbert Robertson.

HAMMERSMITH BOROUGH.

General Walter Tuckfield Goldsworthy.

HAMPSTEAD BOROUGH.

Edward Brodie Hoare.

ISLINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division.

George Christopher Trout Bartley.

West Division.

Thomas Lough.

East Division.

Benjamin Louis Cohen.

South Division.

Sir Albert Kaye Rollit, Knt.

KENSINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division.

William Edward Thompson Sharpe.

South Division.

Lord Warkworth.

LONDON CITY.

Sir Reginald Hanson, Bart.
Hon. Alban George Henry Gibbs.

LONDON UNIVERSITY.

Right Hon. Sir John Lubbock, Bart.

MARYLEBONE BOROUGH.

East Division.

Edmund Boulnois.

West Division.

Sir Horace Brand Townsend-Farquhar, Bart.

PADDINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division.

John Aird.

South Division.

Thomas George Fardell.

ST. GEORGE, HANOVER SQUARE.

Right Hon. George Joachim Goschen.

Middlesex—*cont.*

ST. PANCRAS BOROUGH.

North Division.

Edward Robert Pacy Moon.

East Division.

Robert Grant Webster.

West Division.

Henry Robert Graham.

South Division.

Captain Herbert Merton Jessel.

SHOREDITCH BOROUGH.

Hoxton Division.

James Stuart.

Haggerston Division.

John Lowles.

STRAND BOROUGH.

Hon. William Frederic Danvers Smith.

TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH.

Whitechapel Division.

Sir Samuel Montagu, Bart.

St. George's Division.

Harry Hananel Marks.

Limehouse Division.

Harry Simeon Samuel.

Mile End Division.

Spencer Charrington.

Stepney Division.

Frederick Wootton Isaacson.

Bow and Bromley Division.

Hon. Lionel Raleigh Holland.

Poplar Division.

Sydney Charles Buxton.

WESTMINSTER BOROUGH.

William Lehmann Ashmead-Bartlett Burdett-Coutts.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

NORTHERN DIVISION.

Reginald McKenna.

WESTERN DIVISION.

Right Hon. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, Knt.

SOUTHERN DIVISION.

Colonel the Hon. Frederick Courtenay Morgan.

MONMOUTH BOROUGHS.

Albert Spicer.

NORFOLK.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION.

Joseph Arch.

SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION.

Thomas Leigh Hare.

NORTHERN DIVISION.

Herbert Hardy Cozens-Hardy.

EASTERN DIVISION.

Robert John Price.

MID DIVISION.

Frederick William Wilson.

SOUTHERN DIVISION.

Francis Taylor.

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH.

Captain Sir John Charles Ready Colomb, K.C.M.G.

KING'S LYNN BOROUGH (LYNN REGIS).

Thomas Gibson Bowles.

NORWICH CITY.

Samuel Hoare.

Sir Harry Bullard, Knt.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

NORTHERN DIVISION.

Edward Philip Monckton.

EASTERN DIVISION.

Francis Allston Channing.

MID DIVISION.

James Pender.

SOUTHERN DIVISION.

Hon. Edward Sholto Douglas-Pennant.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH.

Henry Labouchere.

Charles Augustus Adolph Drucker.

PETERBOROUGH CITY.

Robert Purvis.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

WANSBECK DIVISION.

Charles Fenwick.

TYNESIDE DIVISION.

Joseph Albert Pease.

HEXHAM DIVISION.

Wentworth Canning Blackett Beaumont.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED DIVISION.

Sir Edward Grey, Bart.

NORTHUMBERLAND—*cont.*

MORPETH BOROUGH.
Thomas Burt.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE CITY.
Sir Charles Frederick Hamond, Knt.
William Donaldson Cruddas.

TYNEMOUTH BOROUGH.
Richard Sim Donkin.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

BASSETLAW DIVISION.
Sir Frederick George Milner, Bart.

NEWARK DIVISION.
Hon. Harold Heneage Finch-Hatton.

RUSHCLIFFE DIVISION.
John Edward Ellis.

MANSFIELD DIVISION.
John Carvell Williams.

NOTTINGHAM BOROUGH.

West Division.
James Henry Yoxall.

East Division.
Edward Bond.

South Division.
Lord Henry Bentinck.

OXFORDSHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR BANBURY) DIVISION.
Albert Brassey.

MID (OR WOODSTOCK) DIVISION.
George Herbert Morrell.

SOUTHERN (OR HENLEY) DIVISION.
Robert Trotter Hermon-Hodge.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.
Right Hon. Sir John Robert Mowbray, Bart.
John Gilbert Talbot.

OXFORD CITY.
Sir Arthur Annesley Viscount Valentia.

RUTLANDSHIRE.
George Henry Finch.

SHROPSHIRE (SALOP).

WESTERN (OR OSWESTRY) DIVISION.
Stanley Leighton.

SHROPSHIRE—*cont.*

NORTHERN (OR NEWPORT) DIVISION.
Colonel William Slaney Kenyon-Slaney.

MID (OR WELLINGTON) DIVISION.
Alexander Hargreaves Brown.

SOUTHERN (OR LUDLOW) DIVISION.
Robert Jasper More.

SHREWSBURY BOROUGH.
Henry David Greene.

SOMERSETSHIRE.

NORTHERN DIVISION.
Evan Henry Llewellyn.

WELLS DIVISION.
Hon. Hylton George Hylton-Jolliffe.

FROME DIVISION.
John Emmott Barlow.

EASTERN DIVISION.
Henry Hobhouse.

SOUTHERN DIVISION.
Edward Strachey.

BRIDGWATER DIVISION.
Edward James Stanley.

WESTERN (OR WELLINGTON) DIVISION.
Sir Alexander Fuller Acland-Hood, Bart.

BATH CITY.
Colonel Charles Wyndham Murray.
Edmond Robert Wodehouse.

TAUNTON BOROUGH.
Colonel Alfred Cholmeley Earle-Welby.

STAFFORDSHIRE.

LEEK DIVISION.
Charles Bill.

BURTON DIVISION.
Sydney Evershed.

WESTERN DIVISION.
Hamar Alfred Bass.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION.
James Heath.

LICHFIELD DIVISION.
Thomas Courtenay Theydon Warner.

KINGSWINFORD DIVISION.
Right Hon. Alexander Staveley Hill.

STAFFORDSHIRE—*cont.*

HANDSWORTH DIVISION.

Sir Henry Meysey Meysey-Thompson, Bart.

HANLEY BOROUGH.

William Woodall.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH.

William Allen.

STAFFORD BOROUGH.

Charles Edward Shaw.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT BOROUGH.

Douglas Harry Coghill.

WALSALL BOROUGH.

Sydney Gedge.

WEDNESBURY BOROUGH.

Walford Davis Green.

WEST BROMWICH BOROUGH.

James Ernest Spencer.

WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH.

West Division.

Sir Alfred Hickman, Knt.

East Division.

Right Hon. Sir Henry Hartley Fowler, G.C.S.I.

South Division.

Right Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers.

SUFFOLK.

NORTHERN (OR LOWESTOFT) DIVISION.

Harry Seymour Foster.

NORTH-EASTERN (OR EYE) DIVISION.

Francis Seymour Stevenson.

NORTH-WESTERN (OR STOWMARKET) DIVISION.

Ian Zachary Malcolm.

SOUTH (OR SUDBURY) DIVISION.

William Cuthbert Quilter.

SOUTH-EASTERN (OR WOODBRIDGE) DIVISION.

Captain Ernest George Pretyman.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS BOROUGH.

Henry Arthur Cadogan Viscount Chelsea.

IPSWICH BOROUGH.

Daniel Ford Goddard.
Sir Charles Dalrymple, Bart.

SURREY.

NORTH-WESTERN (OR CHERTSEY) DIVISION.

Charles Harvey Combe.

SOUTH-WESTERN (OR GUILDFORD) DIVISION.

Right Hon. William St. John Fremantle Brodrick.

SOUTH-EASTERN (OR REIGATE) DIVISION

Hon. Henry Cubitt.

MID (OR EPSOM) DIVISION.

Thomas Townsend Bucknill.

KINGSTON DIVISION.

Thomas Skewes-Cox.

NORTH-EASTERN (OR WIMBLEDON) DIVISION.

Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor.

BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM.

Battersea Division.

John Burns.

Clapham Division.

Percy Melville Thornton.

CAMBERWELL BOROUGH.

North Division.

Colonel Philip Hugh Dalbiac.

Peckham Division.

Frederick George Banbury.

Dulwich Division.

Sir John Blundell Maple, Knt.

CROYDON BOROUGH.

Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.

LAMBETH BOROUGH.

North Division.

Henry Morton Stanley.

Kennington Division.

Frederic Lucas Cook.

Brixton Division.

Hon. Evelyn Hubbard.

Norwood Division.

Charles Ernest Tritton.

NEWINGTON BOROUGH.

West Division.

Captain Cecil William Norton.

Walworth Division.

James Bailey.

SURREY—*cont.*

SOUTHWARK BOROUGH.

West Division.

Richard Knight Causton.

Rotherhithe Division.

John Cumming Macdona.

Bermondsey Division.

Alfred Lafone.

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH.

Henry Kimber.

SUSSEX.

NORTH-WESTERN (OR HORSHAM) DIVISION.

John Heywood Johnstone.

SOUTH-WESTERN (OR CHICHESTER) DIVISION.

Lord Edmund Bernard Talbot.

NORTHERN (OR EAST GRINSTEAD) DIVISION.

George Joachim Goschen (Junior).

MID (OR LEWES) DIVISION.

Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart.

SOUTHERN (OR EASTBOURNE) DIVISION.

Admiral Edward Field.

EASTERN (OR RYE) DIVISION.

Arthur Montagu Brookfield.

BRIGHTON BOROUGH.

Gerald Walter Erskine Loder.
Bruce Canning Vernon-Wentworth.

HASTINGS BOROUGH.

William Lucas-Shadwell.

WARWICKSHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR TAMWORTH) DIVISION.

Philip Albert Muntz.

NORTH-EASTERN (OR NUNEATON) DIVISION.

Francis Alexander Newdigate.

SOUTH-WESTERN (OR STRATFORD-ON-AVON) DIVISION.

Colonel Victor Milward.

SOUTH-EASTERN (OR RUGBY) DIVISION.

Hon. Richard Greville Verney.

WARWICKSHIRE—*cont.*

ASTON MANOR BOROUGH.

Capt. George William Grice-Hutchinson.

BIRMINGHAM CITY.

Edgbaston Division.

George Dixon.

West Division.

Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain.

Central Division.

Ebenezer Parkes.

North Division.

William Kenrick.

East Division.

Sir John Benjamin Stone, Knt.

Bordesley Division.

Right Hon. Jesse Collings.

South Division.

Joseph Powell-Williams.

COVENTRY BOROUGH.

Charles James Murray.

WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON BOROUGH.

Hon. Alfred Lyttelton.

WESTMORLAND.

NORTHERN (OR APPLEBY) DIVISION.

Sir Joseph Savory, Bart.

SOUTHERN (OR KENDAL) DIVISION.

Captain Josceline FitzRoy Bagot.

WILTSHIRE.

NORTHERN (OR CRICKLADE) DIVISION.

Alfred Hopkinson.

NORTH-WESTERN (OR CHIPPENHAM) DIVISION.

Sir John Poynder Dickson-Poynder, Bart.

WESTERN (OR WESTBURY) DIVISION.

Captain Richard G. W. Chaloner.

EASTERN (OR DEVIZES) DIVISION.

Edward Alfred Goulding.

SOUTHERN (OR WILTON) DIVISION.

Jacob Pleydell-Bouverie Viscount Folkestone.

SALISBURY CITY.

Edward Henry Hulse.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

Western (or Bewdley) Division.
Alfred Baldwin.

Southern (or Evesham) Division.
Colonel Charles Wigram Long.

Mid (or Droitwich) Division.
Richard Biddulph Martin.

Northern (or Oldbury) Division.
John William Wilson.

Eastern Division.
Joseph Austen Chamberlain.

DUDLEY BOROUGH.
Brooke Robinson.

KIDDERMINSTER BOROUGH.
Augustus Frederick Godson.

WORCESTER CITY.
Hon. George Higginson Allsopp.

YORKSHIRE.

North Riding.

Thirsk and Malton Division.
John Grant Lawson.

Richmond Division.
John Hutton.

Cleveland Division.
Alfred Edward Pease.

Whitby Division.
Ernest William Beckett.

East Riding.

Holderness Division.
Captain George Richard Bethell.

Buckrose Division.
Angus Holden.

Howdenshire Division.
Colonel William Henry Wilson-Todd.

West Riding, Northern Part.

Skipton Division.
Walter Morrison.

Keighley Division.
John Brigg.

Shipley Division.
James Fortescue Flannery.

Yorkshire—West Riding—*cont.*

Sowerby Division.
Right Hon. John William Mellor.

Elland Division.
Thomas Wayman.

West Riding, Southern Part.

Morley Division.
Alfred Eddison Hutton.

Normanton Division.
Benjamin Pickard.

Colne Valley Division.
Sir James Kitson, Bart.

Holmfirth Division.
Henry Joseph Wilson.

Barnsley Division.
William George Spencer Scott Earl Compton.

Hallamshire Division.
Sir Frederick Thorpe Mappin, Bart.

Rotherham Division.
Right Hon. Arthur Herbert Dyke Acland.

Doncaster Division.
Frederick William Fison.

West Riding, Eastern Part.

Ripon Division.
John Lloyd Wharton.

Otley Division.
Marmaduke d'Arcy Wyvill.

Barkston Ash Division.
Colonel Robert Gunter.

Osgoldcross Division.
Sir John Austin, Bart.

Pudsey Division.
Briggs Priestley.

Spen Valley Division.
Thomas Palmer Whittaker.

BRADFORD BOROUGH.

West Division.
Ernest Flower.

Central Division.
James Leslie Wanklyn.

East Division.
Captain the Hon. Ronald Henry Fulton Greville.

YORKSHIRE—*cont.*

DEWSBURY BOROUGH.

Mark Oldroyd.

HALIFAX BOROUGH.

Alfred Arnold.
William Rawson Shaw.

HUDDERSFIELD BOROUGH.

Sir James Thomas Woodhouse, Knt.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL BOROUGH.

East Division.

Joseph Thomas Firbank.

Central Division.

Sir Henry Seymour King, K.C.I.E.

West Division.

Charles Henry Wilson.

LEEDS CITY.

North Division.

Right Hon. William Lawies Jackson.

Central Division.

Right Hon. Gerald William Balfour.

East Division.

Thomas Richmond Leuty.

West Division.

Right Hon. Herbert John Gladstone.

South Division.

John Lawson Walton.

MIDDLESBROUGH BOROUGH.

Joseph Havelock Wilson.

PONTEFRACT BOROUGH.

Thomas Willans Nussey.

SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH.

Joseph Compton Rickett.

SHEFFIELD BOROUGH.

Attercliffe Division.

Batty Langley.

Brightside Division.

Right Hon. Anthony John Mundella.

Central Division.

Colonel Sir Charles Edward Howard Vincent, Knt.

Hallam Division.

Right Hon. Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley.

Ecclesall Division.

Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, Knt.

WAKEFIELD CITY.

William Charles de Mure Fitzwilliam, Viscount Milton.

YORK CITY.

John George Butcher.
Sir Frank Lockwood, Knt.

WALES—30 Members.

ANGLESEY.

Ellis Jones Griffith.

BRECKNOCKSHIRE.

Charles Morley.

CARDIGANSHIRE.

Matthew Vaughan-Davies.

CARMARTHENSHIRE.

EASTERN DIVISION.

Abel Thomas.

WESTERN DIVISION.

John Lloyd Morgan.

CARMARTHEN BOROUGHS.

Sir John Jones Jenkins, Knt.

CARNARVONSHIRE.

SOUTHERN (OR EIFION) DIVISION.

John Bryn Roberts.

NORTHERN (OR ARFON) DIVISION.

William Jones.

CARNARVON BOROUGHS.

David Lloyd-George.

DENBIGHSHIRE.

EASTERN DIVISION.

Right Hon. Sir George Osborne Morgan, Bart.

WESTERN DIVISION.

John Herbert Roberts.

DENBIGH BOROUGHS.

William Tudor Howell.

FLINTSHIRE.

Samuel Smith.

FLINT BOROUGHS.

John Herbert Lewis.

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

EASTERN DIVISION.

Alfred Thomas.

RHONDDA DIVISION.

William Abraham.

WESTERN (OR GOWER) DIVISION.

David Randell.

MID DIVISION.

Samuel Thomas Evans.

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SOUTHERN DIVISION.
Major Wyndham Henry Wyndham-Quin.

CARDIFF BOROUGH.
James Mackenzie Maclean.

MERTHYR TYDVIL BOROUGH.
David Alfred Thomas.
William Pritchard Morgan.

SWANSEA BOROUGH.
Swansea Town.
Sir John Thomas Dillwyn Llewelyn, Bart.

Swansea District.
David Brynmor Jones.

MERIONETHSHIRE.
Thomas Edward Ellis.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE.
Arthur Charles Humphreys-Owen.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGHS.
Major Edward Pryce-Jones.

PEMBROKESHIRE.
William Rees-Davies.

PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORDWEST BOROUGH.
General John Wimburn Laurie.

RADNORSHIRE.
Powlett Charles John Milbank.

SCOTLAND—72 Members.

ABERDEENSHIRE.
EASTERN DIVISION.
Thomas Ryburn Buchanan.

WESTERN DIVISION.
Robert Farquharson.

ABERDEEN BURGH.
North Division.
Captain Duncan Vernon Pirie.

South Division.
Right Hon. James Bryce.

ARGYLLSHIRE.
Donald Ninian Nicol.

AYRSHIRE.
NORTHERN DIVISION.
Hon. Thomas Horatio Arthur Ernest Cochrane.

SOUTHERN DIVISION.
Sir William Arrol, Knt.

AYRSHIRE—*cont.*

AYR DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Charles Lindsay Orr-Ewing.

KILMARNOCK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Colonel John McAusland Denny.

BANFFSHIRE.
Sir William Wedderburn, Bart.

BERWICKSHIRE.
Harold John Tennant.

BUTESHIRE.
Right Hon. Andrew Graham Murray.

CAITHNESS-SHIRE.
Gavin Brown Clark

WICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Thomas Charles H. Hedderwick.

CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS SHIRES.
Right Hon. John Blair Balfour.

DUMBARTONSHIRE.
Alexander Wylie.

DUMFRIESSHIRE.
Robinson Souttar.

DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Sir Robert Threshie Reid, Knt.

EDINBURGHSHIRE.
MIDLOTHIAN.
Sir Thomas David Gibson-Carmichael, Bart.

EDINBURGH BURGH.
East Division.
Robert Wallace.

West Division.
Sir Lewis McIver, Bart.

Central Division.
William McEwan.

South Division.
Robert Cox.

EDINBURGH AND ST. ANDREWS UNIVERSITIES.
Sir William Overend Priestley, Knt.

LEITH DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson.

ELGIN AND NAIRN.
John Edward Gordon.

ELGIN DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Alexander Asher.

FIFESHIRE.

Eastern Division.

Right Hon. Herbert Henry Asquith.

Western Division.

Augustine Birrell.

KIRKCALDY DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

James Henry Dalziel.

ST. ANDREWS DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Henry Torrens Anstruther.

FORFARSHIRE.

[Vacant.]

DUNDEE BURGH.

Edmund Robertson.
Sir John Leng, Knt.

MONTROSE DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

John Shiress Will.

HADDINGTONSHIRE.

Richard Burdon Haldane.

INVERNESS-SHIRE.

James Evan Bruce Baillie.

INVERNESS DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Sir Robert Bannatyne Finlay, Knt.

KINCARDINESHIRE.

John William Crombie.

KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE.

Sir Mark John McTaggart Stewart, Bart.

LANARKSHIRE.

Govan Division.

John Wilson.

Partick Division.

James Parker Smith.

North-Western Division.

John Goundry Holburn.

North-Eastern Division.

John Colville.

Mid Division.

James Caldwell.

Southern Division.

James Henry Cecil Hozier.

Lanarkshire—*cont.*

GLASGOW BURGH.

Bridgeton Division.

Right Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Bart.

Camlachie Division.

Alexander Cross.

St. Rollox Division.

Ferdinand Faithfull Begg.

Central Division.

John George Alexander Baird.

College Division.

Sir John M. Stirling-Maxwell, Bart.

Tradeston Division.

Archibald Cameron Corbett.

Blackfriars and Hutchesontown Division.

Andrew Dryburgh Provand.

GLASGOW AND ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES.

James Alexander Campbell.

LINLITHGOWSHIRE.

Alexander Ure.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

Sir Leonard Lyell, Bart.

PEEBLES AND SELKIRK SHIRES.

Walter Thorburn.

PERTHSHIRE.

Eastern Division.

Sir John George Smythe Kinloch, Bart.

Western Division.

Sir Donald Currie, K.C.M.G.

PERTH BURGH.

Robert Wallace.

RENFREWSHIRE.

Eastern Division.

Michael Hugh Shaw-Stewart.

Western Division.

Charles Bine Renshaw.

GREENOCK BURGH.

Sir Thomas Sutherland, K.C.M.G.

PAISLEY BURGH.

Sir William Dunn, Bart.

ROSS AND CROMARTY SHIRES.
James Galloway Weir.

ROXBURGHSHIRE.
John Charles Scott Earl of Dalkeith.

HAWICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Thomas Shaw.

STIRLINGSHIRE.
James McKillop.

FALKIRK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Wilson.

STIRLING DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, G.C.B.

SUTHERLANDSHIRE.
John McLeod.

WIGTOWNSHIRE.
Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell, Bart.

IRELAND—103 Members.

ANTRIM.
NORTH DIVISION.
Colonel Hugh McCalmont.

MID DIVISION.
Hon. Robert Torrens O'Neill.

EAST DIVISION.
Captain James Martin McCalmont.

SOUTH DIVISION.
William Grey Ellison Macartney.

BELFAST BOROUGH.
North Division.

Sir James Horner Haslett, Knt.

East Division.

Gustav Wilhelm Wolff.

South Division.

William Johnston.

West Division.

Hugh Oakeley Arnold-Forster.

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NORTH DIVISION.
Colonel Edmund James Saunderson.

MID DIVISION.
Dunbar Plunket Barton.

SOUTH DIVISION.
Edward M'Hugh.

CARLOW.
John Hammond.

CAVAN.
WEST DIVISION.
James Patrick Farrell.

EAST DIVISION.
Samuel Young.

CLARE.
EAST DIVISION.
William Hoey Kearney Redmond.

WEST DIVISION.
Major James Eustace Jameson.

CORK.
NORTH DIVISION.
James Christopher Flynn.

NORTH-EAST DIVISION.
William Abraham.

MID DIVISION.
Charles Kearns Deane Tanner.

EAST DIVISION.
Captain Anthony John Charles Donelan.

WEST DIVISION
James Gilhooly.

SOUTH DIVISION.
Edward Barry.

SOUTH-EAST DIVISION.
Andrew Commins.

CORK CITY.
James Francis Xavier O'Brien.
Maurice Healy.

DONEGAL.
NORTH DIVISION.
Thomas Bartholomew Curran.

WEST DIVISION.
Timothy Daniel Sullivan.

EAST DIVISION.
Arthur O'Connor.

SOUTH DIVISION.
John Gordon Swift MacNeill.

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Colonel Thomas Waring.

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West Division.

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South Division.

Michael McCartan.

NEWRY BOROUGH.

Patrick George Hamilton Carvill.

DUBLIN.

North Division.

John Joseph Clancy.

South Division.

Hon. Horace Curzon Plunkett.

DUBLIN CITY.

College Green Division.

James Lawrence Carew.

Harbour Division.

Timothy Charles Harrington.

St. Stephen's Green Division

William Kenny.

St. Patrick's Division.

William Field.

DUBLIN UNIVERSITY.

William Edward Hartpole Lecky.
Edward Henry Carson.

FERMANAGH.

North Division.

Richard Martin Dane.

South Division.

Jeremiah Jordan.

GALWAY.

West (or Connemara) Division.

William O'Malley.

North Division.

Denis Kilbride.

East Division.

John Roche.

South Division.

David Sheehy.

GALWAY BOROUGH.

John Pinkerton.

KERRY.

North Division

Michael Joseph Flavin.

West Division.

Sir Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde, Bart.

South Division.

Thomas George Farrell.

East Division.

Hon. James B. Burke Roche.

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North Division.

Charles John Engledow.

South Division.

Matthew Joseph Minch.

KILKENNY.

North Division.

Patrick McDermott.

South Division.

Samuel Morris.

KILKENNY CITY.

Patrick O'Brien.

KING'S COUNTY.

Birr Division.

Bernard Charles Molloy.

Tullamore Division.

Joseph Francis Fox.

LEITRIM.

North Division.

Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh.

South Division.

Jasper Tully.

LIMERICK.

West Division.

Michael Austin.

East Division.

John Finucane.

LIMERICK CITY.

Francis Arthur O'Keeffe.

LONDONDERRY.

NORTH DERRY DIVISION.

Right Hon. John Atkinson.

SOUTH DERRY DIVISION.

Sir Thomas Lea, Bart.

LONDONDERRY CITY.

Edmund Francis Vesey Knox.

LONGFORD.

NORTH DIVISION.

Justin McCarthy.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Hon. Edward Blake.

LOUTH.

NORTH DIVISION.

Timothy Michael Healy.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Richard McGhee.

MAYO.

NORTH DIVISION.

Daniel Crilly.

WEST DIVISION.

Robert Ambrose.

EAST DIVISION.

John Dillon.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Michael Davitt.

MEATH.

NORTH DIVISION.

John Howard Parnell.

SOUTH DIVISION.

James Gibney.

MONAGHAN.

NORTH DIVISION.

Daniel Macaleese.

SOUTH DIVISION.

James Daly.

QUEEN'S COUNTY.

OSSORY DIVISION.

Eugène Crean.

LEIX DIVISION.

Mark Antony McDonnell.

ROSCOMMON.

NORTH DIVISION.

James O'Kelly.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Luke Patrick Hayden.

SLIGO.

NORTH DIVISION.

Bernard Collery.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Thomas Curran.

TIPPERARY.

NORTH DIVISION.

Patrick Joseph O'Brien.

MID DIVISION.

James Francis Hogan.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Francis Mandeville.

EAST DIVISION.

Thomas Joseph Condon.

TYRONE.

NORTH DIVISION.

Right Hon. Serjeant Charles Hare Hemphill.

MID DIVISION.

George Murnaghan.

EAST DIVISION.

Patrick Charles Doogan.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Thomas Wallace Russell.

WATERFORD.

WEST DIVISION.

James John Shee.

EAST DIVISION.

Patrick Joseph Power.

WATERFORD CITY.

John Edward Redmond.

WESTMEATH.

NORTH DIVISION.

James Tuite.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Donal Sullivan.

WEXFORD.

NORTH DIVISION.

Thomas Joseph Healy.

SOUTH DIVISION.

Peter Ffrench.

WICKLOW.

WEST DIVISION.

James O'Connor.

EAST DIVISION.

William Joseph Corbet.

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"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the time has come when the cases of all prisoners convicted under the Treason Felony Act who are, and have been for many years, undergoing punishment for offences arising out of insurrectionary movements connected with Ireland, may be advantageously reconsidered."—(*Mr. Patrick O'Brien*) 123

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"That the Committee have leave to hear Counsel to such extent as they shall see fit, and have power to send for persons, papers, and records;

"That the Committee do consist of Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Bigham, Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Secretary Chamberlain, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Cripps, Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. John Ellis, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. George Wyndham;

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"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the Catholics of Ireland have suffered under an intolerable grievance in respect of University Education; that the existence of this grievance has been recognised by successive Governments; and that it is the duty of the Government immediately to propose legislation with a view to placing Irish Catholics on a footing of equality with their fellow countrymen in all matters concerned with University Education."—*(Mr. Engledow)* 257

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"And we humbly express the regret of this House that, although the Commissioners appointed by your Majesty in 1892 to inquire into the Land Question in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland have reported that nearly 2,000,000 acres of land now occupied as deer forests, grouse moors, &c., 'might be cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or small tenants,' there is no indication in your Majesty's Speech that arrangements will be made for acquiring some portion of this land, so that the crofters, cottars and fishermen may be able to live under more favourable conditions than those under which many of them now exist."—*(Mr. Weir)* 335

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INDIAN FAMINE :—Amendment proposed at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"And we humbly pray that your Majesty will be greatly pleased to direct that a full and independent Inquiry shall forthwith be made into the condition of the masses of the Indian people, with a view to ascertain the causes by reason of which they are helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence."—*(Sir W. Wedderburn)* 517

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Secret Service Fund:—Amendment standing in name of Mr. T. M. Healy withdrawn 553

Registration Laws—Amendment proposed:—

"And we humbly express our regret that no Measure is announced by your Majesty for the simplification of the registration laws for Parliamentary and local government elections"—*(Mr. Strachey)* 554

Mr. Brigg 558
Mr. R. G. Webster ... 560
Mr. McKenna 560
Secretary to the Local Government Board 561
Sir A. Rollit 562
Sir C. Dilke 564

Question put, "That these words be there added."—The House divided:—Ayes, 59; Noes, 141.—(Division List—No. 6—appended) 564

Deportation of Paupers:—Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question to add the words,—

"And that we humbly represent to your Majesty the great regret of this House that no reference has been made in your Majesty's Speech regarding a Bill to discontinue the deportation of paupers from England and Scotland to Ireland"—*(Mr. Murnaghan)* 565

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Mr. J. P. Farrell ... 568
Mr. Daly 568
Mr. Power 571
Chief Secretary for Ireland... 571
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Sir M. Stewart 575
Mr. Caldwell 575
Mr. Field 576
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Amendment withdrawn 577

Ottoman Empire Reforms:—Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question to add the words,—

"And humbly to represent to your Majesty, as the Sovereign of many millions of Mussulman subjects, the urgent desirability of sending a special envoy to Constantinople, in order to guard, not only British Imperial interests, but to promote the carrying through of appropriate reforms for all the inhabitants, irrespective of race or religion, of the Ottoman Empire"—*(Mr. Disraeli)* ... 577

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Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... 585
Sir W. Harcourt ... 591
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Supply:—Resolved, that this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty 598

Ordered, that the several Estimates presented to this House during the present Session be referred to the Committee of Supply 598

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Unlawful Possession Bill:—Motion made—

"That the Bill be read 2°."—*(Sir B. Stone)* 598

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Debate adjourned; to be resumed to-morrow 598

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT):—Committee thereupon deferred ... 599

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES):—Adjourned Debate on Motion for leave to bring in a Bill (21st January) further adjourned 599

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY):—Committee thereupon deferred 599

Shops (Early Closing) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 599

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CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES:—Nominated by Mr. Speaker 600

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Benefices (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred from Wednesday, 10th March ... 601

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ARMY ESTIMATES—Cost of the Army—*(Sir C. Dilke)* 601

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CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Judges' retirement—*(Mr. E. Lawrence)* 602

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Derelicts—*(Mr. Macdona)* 602

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Africa—Conference of Powers—*(Sir C. Dilke)* 602

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"That this Bill be now Read a Second time."—*(Sir Howard Vincent)* 602

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President, Board of Trade 605 *Mr. Whittaker* 610

Amendment proposed:
"That the Debate be now Adjourned."—*(Sir A. K. Rollit)* 613

Mr. Lough 616
Mr. Field 616
Sir W. Harcourt ... 617
Sir F. Powell 619
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 616, 619]

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Mr. Lough 620
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Mr. J. Lowther 622
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Mr. Galloway 645
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Mr. Herbert Roberts ... 646
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Mr. Maclean 651
Mr. Howell 656

Mr. Johnston claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question 658

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Factory Acts (Fishing Trade) Bill:—

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NEW MEMBER SWORN—Augustus Henry Eden Allhusen, esquire, for the Borough of Salisbury 691

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE:—

Motion made:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon, and further to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company; that the Committee have leave to hear counsel to such extent as they shall see fit, and have power to send for persons, papers, and records."—(*Secretary of State for the Colonies*) 762

Amendment proposed:—

"That, in view of the peaceful settlement of affairs in the Chartered Company's territories, the punishment of all persons connected with the raid into the Transvaal, and the inexpediency in the interest of all South Africa, of re-opening questions which have now been disposed of, this House thinks it unnecessary to re-appoint the Select Committee of 1896."—(*Mr. J. M. Maclean*) 762

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MERCHANDISE MARKS:—Select Committee appointed to inquire into the effects and operation of the Merchandise Marks Act 1887, and into the subject of Merchandise Marks generally.—(*Sir Albert Rollit*) 779
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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE:—Resolved:—

"That Standing Order 11 be suspended and the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to the sitting of the House this day."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* 800

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE:—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th January],

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon, and further to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company."

"That the Committee have leave to hear Counsel to such an extent as they shall see fit, and have power to send for persons, papers and records."—*(Secretary of State for the Colonies)* 800

Amendment proposed, after the word "That," to leave out to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"in view of the peaceful settlement of affairs in the Chartered Company's territories, the punishment of all persons connected with the raid into the Transvaal, and the inexpediency, in the interests of all South Africa, of re-opening questions which have now been disposed of, this House thinks it unnecessary to reappoint the Select Committee of 1896."—*(Mr. Maclean).*

Debate resumed 801

Secretary of State for the Colonies 802
Sir W. Harcourt ... 808
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Dr. Clark 817
Sir H. Howorth 820
Mr. Courtney 822
Mr. Maclean 822

Amendment withdrawn; Main Question put and agreed to 823

After short Debate, Committee named 828

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY) :—Motion made—

First Lord of the Treasury 828, 839
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Sir R. Reid 838
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Resolution Agreed to 842

SUPPLY.—Considered in Committee :—

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1896–7 :—

Motion made, and Question proposed :—

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £255,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897" 843

Amendment proposed, to reduce Vote by £20,000—*(Mr. Knox)* ... 843

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 23; Noes, 127.—(Division List—No. 8). —Original Question put, and agreed to.—Resolution to be reported upon Monday next 848

Public Health (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 848

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (REPORTS OF MONEY COMMITTEES) :—Resolved—

"That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means and other Committees authorising the expenditure of Public Money may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House, except of Standing Order No. 5."—*(First Lord of the Treasury)* 848

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) :—Considered in Committee :—

Motion made—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of any sums not exceeding in the whole £5,458,000, for the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow by means of terminable annuities, payable out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, such sums as may be required for the purpose of providing money for the issue of the above-mentioned sum of £5,458,000 out of the Consolidated Fund, or the repayment to that Fund of all or any part of the sum so issued, and also to authorise the application of the Surplus of Income above Expenditure for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, towards paying any sums authorised to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund for Military Works."—*(Mr. Brodrick)* 848

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General Laurie 869

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LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) :—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st January], "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases."—*(The Attorney General)* 874

Bill presented, and Read the First time.—[Bill 101] 874

Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act (1885) Amendment Bill :—

Motion made,

"That this Bill be now read a Second time."—*(Mr. T. M. Healy)* 875

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Monday next 875

Unlawful Possession Bill :—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question proposed [26th January]. "That the Bill be now read a Second Time." Debate resumed, and Adjourned to Monday next 876

Shops (Early Closing) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 882

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS) COMMITTEE :—After short Debate, Select Committee appointed... 882

Industries (Ireland) Bill :—To afford facilities for the establishment and development of Industries in Ireland—(Bill 102) 884

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Companies' Bill [H.L.] :—A Bill to amend the Companies Act, presented by the Earl of Dudley, and Read 1ª—[No. 7] 885

Parliamentary Franchise (Women) Bill [H.L.] :—A Bill for extending the Parliamentary franchise to women, presented by Viscount Templetown, and Read 1ª—[No. 8] 885

INDIAN FAMINE :—*Lord Kinnaird* 885
Under Secretary for India 894 *Lord Wenlock* 897
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Payment of Common Jurors—Question, Mr. Lloyd Morgan; Answer, Home Secretary 914

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Warden Estate (Co. Kerry)—Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 915

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Mercantile Marine (Classification)—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, President of the Board of Trade 919

Dog Muzzling (Metropolis)—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture 920

Sierra Leone Railway—Question, Mr. Bill; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 920

Irish Land Commission (Buchannan *v.* Cowell)—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 921

Prison Service (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 921

Labour Department (Local Correspondents)—Question, Mr. Marks; Answer, President of the Board of Trade... 922

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Vaccination Officers' Fees—Question, Mr. Holland; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 923

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Khama's Territory (Liquor Licences)—Question, Sir Mark Stewart; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 924

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Catholic University (Ireland)—Question, Mr. P. M'Hugh; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 925

Shipping and Maritime Property (Compensation for Injury)—Question, Sir John Colomb; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 925

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—To amend the Military Lands Act, 1892—(103) 926

Berriew Schools Bill:—To annul an Order in Council confirming a scheme relating to the Foundation known as the Berriew School, presented, and Read the First time —(104) 926

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant, Etc.):—Considered in Committee—

Motion made—

"(*a*) to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an aid grant to Voluntary Schools, not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools;

"(*b*) to repeal as regards day schools so much of section nineteen of the Elementary Education Act 1876, as imposes a limit on the Parliamentary schools in England and Wales; and

"(*c*) to make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools"—(*First Lord of the Treasury*) 926

Mr. Acland 944
Mr. Jebb 959
Sir C. Dilke 965
Mr. Courtney 971
Mr. Cripps 974
Mr. C. Morley 979
Major Rasch 981
Mr. Perks 981
Mr. Bartley 984
Mr. Spicer 988
Mr. Dixon 993
Sir F. Powell 996
Sir J. Leese 999
Sir J. Lubbock 1002
Mr. Yoxall 1003
Mr. A. Hopkinson 1007
Mr. Carvell Williams 1008
Mr. Hobhouse 1010
Mr. Bryn Roberts 1012
Mr. Gray 1014

Committee report progress; to sit again to-morrow 1019

SUPPLY [29TH JANUARY]:—

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1896–7.

Resolution reported and agreed to—

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £255,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897" 1019

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1020

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1020

MILITARY WORKS [MONEY]:—Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of any sums not exceeding in the whole £5,458,000, for the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow by means of terminable annuities, payable out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, such sums as may be required for the purpose of providing money for the issue of the above-mentioned sum of £5,458,000 out of the Consolidated Fund, or the repayment to that Fund of all or any part of the sum so issued, and also to authorise the application of the Surplus of Income above Expenditure for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, towards paying any sums authorised to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund for Military Works" 1020

Resolution Read a Second time 1020

Mr. Lough 1020
Under Secretary for War 1020
Sir C. Dilke 1021
Sir J. Colomb 1022
Sir W. Harcourt 1022
Chancellor of the Exchequer ... 1023
Mr. Dillon 1023
Mr. Kearley 1024
Mr. Knox 1024
Dr. Tanner 1024

Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 29.—(Division List—No. 9—appended.) 1024

Bill to provide for defraying the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services, presented and Read the First time—(105) 1025

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 1025

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 1025

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill:—Second Reading deferred... 1026

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Local Government (Elections) Bill:—Read a Second time, and committed for this day 1026

Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act (1895) Amendment Bill:—Committee deferred 1026

Unlawful Possession Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading (29th January) further adjourned 1026

Shops Early Closing Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1027

MOTIONS.

Occupying Tenants Enfranchisement (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill:—To enable Occupying Tenants of houses and places of business to purchase the Fee Simple of their holdings, presented and Read the First time—(106) 1027

Married Persons Small Industrial Incomes (Tax Relief) Bill:—To extend relief from Income Tax to Married Persons with Small Industrial Incomes, however earned, which do not exceed five hundred pounds a year, presented and Read the First time—(107) 1027

Building Feus and Leases (Scotland) Bill:—To amend the Law relating to Feus and Leases for Building in Scotland, presented and Read the First time—(108) 1027

MILITARY WORKS BILL (SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED WORKS):—Copy presented of Schedule showing Proposed Expenditure on Barrack Services under the Military Works Bill 1027

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.)—On the Motion that the House do adjourn—Statement by First Lord of the Treasury 1027

LORDS: TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY 1897.

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.]:—A Bill to consolidate enactments relating to the Post Office, presented by the Duke of Norfolk, and Read 1ª—[No. 9] 1029

Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills:—Resolved "That a Committee of Seven Lords be appointed to join a Committee of the House of Commons to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session"—*(The Lord Chancellor)* 1029

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY 1897.

PRIVATE BILLS:—Chairman of Ways and Means reported list of Bills to originate in the House of Lords 1030

Shops Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1033

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Food Supplies (United Kingdom)—*(Mr. Seton-Karr)* 1033
Russia in North-east Asia—*(Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett)* 1033
Taxation on Clerical Incomes—*(Mr. Hardy)* 1033
Post Office (Four Mile Radius)—*(Mr. Giles)* 1033
Royal Patriotic Fund—*(Mr. Kearley)* 1034
Floating Derelicts—*(Mr. Macdona)* 1034

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AGRICULTURAL PRICES (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh and Mr. Flynn; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1035
ILLEGAL TRAWLING (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate 1036
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CALAIS HARBOUR—Question, Sir Bevan Edwards; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1037
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MANSLAUGHTER AT MANCHESTER—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Home Secretary 1039
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SCIENCE AND ART CLASSES—Questions, Mr. Gray; Answers, Vice President of the Council 1041
ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL, WILLESDEN—Questions, Mr. Yoxall and Mr. Mundella; Answers, Vice President of the Council 1043
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SCHOOL BOARDS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk Burghs); Answer, Lord Advocate 1044
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FLOODS (CO. LONGFORD)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1045
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Tenants Holdings (Co. Monaghan)—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1052

Deportation of Paupers to Ireland—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1052

Crete—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1053

Army Officers' Uniform—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1053

Netley Hospital (Assessment)—Question, Sir Barrington Simeon; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1054

Equivalent Grant (Scotland)—Questions, Mr. Thorburn and Mr. Bryce; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1054

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Parish Council Elections—Questions, Sir Walter Foster; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1056

Illegal Trawling (Ireland)—Question, Colonel Waring; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1056

Chitral Campaign Medal—Question, Mr. Brookfield; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1057

Hulme Cavalry Barracks (Manchester)—Question, Mr. Galloway; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1058

Lord Penrhyn's Quarries—Questions, Mr. Lowther, Mr. Davenport, and Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, President of the Board of Trade [Mr. Speaker] 1058

Necessitous School Boards—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Vice President of the Council 1063

Finner Rifle Range (Co. Donegal)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Under Secretary for War 1063

Lighthouse Keepers—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill and General Laurie; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 1064

Oaths Act (Scottish Form)—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Attorney General 1065

Royal Patriotic Fund—Question, Mr. Kearley; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1066

Western Australia—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1066

Education Grant (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Robertson; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1067

Financial Relations Commission (Great Britain and Ireland)—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1067

Egyptian Expedition:—Statement by First Lord of the Treasury 1067

Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant, Etc.):—Precedence for the Education Resolution—

Motion made:—

"That the order for the Committee on 'Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant, Etc.)' have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day."—(*First Lord of the Treasury*) 1068

Mr. J. Ellis 1068
Mr. Labouchere 1070
Mr. E. Lawrence ... 1070
Sir W. Harcourt... ... 1070
First Lord of the Treasury ... 1072
Mr. Broadhurst 1073
Mr. Lough 1074

First Lord of Treasury claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1075

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The House divided—Ayes, 259 ; Noes, 143.—(Division List—No. 10—appended) ... 1076

Question put accordingly :—The House divided—Ayes, 283 ; Noes, 123—(Division List—No. 11—appended) 1080

Ordered, that the Order for the Committee on "Voluntary Schools [Aid Grant, Etc.]" have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day... 1083

MOTIONS.

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill:—To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886 ; presented, and Read the First time—(109) 1083

Shop Assistants (Half-Holiday) Bill :—To provide that all Shop Assistants shall have one Half-Holiday in each week ; presented, and Read the First time—(110) 1083

County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill:—To amend the existing Laws in Ireland relating to County Surveyors' Superannuation, and other purposes; presented, and Read the First time—(111) 1083

Injuries to Workmen (Employers' Liability) Bill:—To make better provision for Workmen injured in the course of their employment; presented and Read the First time—(112) 1083

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.) :—Considered in Committee :—

Question again proposed—

"That it is expedient—(*a*) to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an Aid Grant to Voluntary Schools, not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools ;

"(*b*) To repeal as regards day schools so much of section nineteen of the Elementary Education Act 1876, as imposes a limit on the Parliamentary grant to Elementary Schools in England and Wales ; and

"(*c*) To make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools."—(*First Lord of the Treasury*)—Debate resumed :—

Mr. Gray 1084
Mr. Goddard 1087
Sir W. Hart Dyke ... 1089
Sir H. Fowler 1098
Solicitor General ... 1111
Mr. Humphreys-Owen ... 1121
Sir A. Rollit 1124
Mr. Dillon 1128
Chancellor of the Exchequer 1129
Sir J. Kennaway ... 1136
Mr. Buxton 1139
Mr. Lucas-Shadwell 1142
Mr. Birrell 1143
Mr. Lloyd-George 1149
Mr. Lough 1150
[*Chairman of Ways and Means* 1151]
Mr. Asquith 1151
First Lord of the Treasury 1150, 1153
Sir W. Harcourt 1154

Question put, "That the word 'necessitous' be there inserted." The Committee divided :—Ayes, 112 ; Noes, 320.—(Division List—No. 12—appended) 1158

Mr. MacNeill (Point of Order) 1161
Chairman of Ways and Means 1162

Question put, "That the Question be now put." The House divided :—Ayes, 296 ; Noes, 142.—(Division List—No. 13—appended) ... 1163

Main Question put accordingly. The Committee divided :—Ayes, 325 ; Noes, 110.—(Division List—No. 14—appended) 1167

Resolution to be reported upon Thursday 1171

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1172

County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland) Bill :—Second Reading deferred 1172

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1172

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill :—Second Reading deferred ... 1172

Local Government Board (Elections) Bill :—Considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment; Bill Read the Third time, and passed 1172

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY 1897.

QUEEN'S SPEECH :—Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, reported ... 1173

Provisional Order Bills :—

London (Clare Market, Strand) Provisional Order. Presented and Read the First time.—(113) 1173

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order. Presented and Read the First time. —(114) 1173

ARBITRATION TREATY (GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES) :—Address for "Copy of the Arbitration Treaty between this Country and the United States as recently signed." 1173

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill :—

Motion made—

"That this Bill be now read a Second time."—(*Mr. Begg*) 1173

Mr. Atherley-Jones ... 1179
Mr. Radcliffe Cooke ... 1185
Mr. Labouchere 1201
Sir W. Lawson 1211
Col. Waring 1214
Mr. Wyndham 1216
Mr. Jebb 1220
Sir W. Harcourt 1225
Mr. Courtney 1229
[*Mr. Speaker* 1195, 1196, 1198, 1199]

Mr. Begg claimed to move, "That the Question be now put." 1231
[*Mr. Speaker*] 1231

The House divided :—Ayes, 214 ; Noes, 170.—(Division List—No. 15—appended) 1232

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."—The House divided :—Ayes, 228 ; Noes, 157.—(Division List—No. 16—appended) 1236

Main Question put, and agreed to ; Bill Read a Second time, and committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next ... 1239

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Land Law (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1239

Licences (Ireland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1239

Working Men's Dwellings Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1239

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act (1896) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1239

Factory Act (Fishing Trade) Bill:—Considered in Committee. Clause 1: Committee report progress; to sit again Monday next 1239

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) (No. 2) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1239

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred 1239

SUPPLY:—Committee deferred 1240

Education Endowments (Ireland) Act (1885) Amendment Bill:—Considered in Committee. Clause 1: Committee report progress; to sit again upon Wednesday 16th June 1240

Shop Assistants (Half-Holiday) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1240

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1240

MOTIONS.

Truck Acts Amendment Bill:—To amend the Truck Acts ordered to be presented, and Read the First time—(115) 1240

Succession (Scotland) Bill:—To assimilate the Laws of Heritable with those of Moveable Succession in Scotland, and for other purposes, presented and Read the First time.—(116) 1240

LORDS: THURSDAY, 4TH FEBRUARY 1897.

Marine Insurance Bill [H.L.]:—Bill for codifying the Law relating to Marine Insurance, presented by the Lord Herschell, and Read 1ª.—[No. 10] 1241

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE:—Appointed 1241

STANDING COMMITTEE:—Ordered that a Standing Committee be appointed... 1242

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE:—Appointed ... 1242

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES—Select Committee appointed 1242

Local Government (Elections) Bill:—Brought from the Commons, and Read 1ª.—*(Lord Herschell)*—[No. 12] 1243

ARMY (INCREASE OF STRENGTH):—*(Viscount de Vesci)* 1243

Lord Wantage ... ... 1257 *Lord Monkswell* 1265
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Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill:—Second Reading upon Monday next 1269

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VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS GRANT (SCOTCH EQUIVALENT)—Question, Mr. Hedderwick; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1312
HOURS OF POLLING (METROPOLIS)—Question, Mr. F. W. Wilson; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1312
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VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.)—Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury... 1313
EXPLOSION AT WOOLWICH—Question, Mr. Woodall; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1313
ARMY ESTIMATES—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1314

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Captain John Sinclair, for County of Forfar 1314
Louis Sinclair, esq., for County of Essex (Southern or Romford Division) 1314

Samuel Woods, esq., for County of Essex (South-Western or Walthamstow Division)... 1314

Employers' Liability (Foreign Shipowners) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred from Tuesday next 1314

MOTION.

Trusts (Scotland) Bill:—To amend the Trusts (Scotland) Act (1867) Amendment Act 1887; presented and Read the First time.—(118) 1314

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS [AID GRANT, ETC.].—Resolution reported and Read a Second time.—Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution"... ... 1314

Mr. Asquith	1315	*Mr. Munro Ferguson*	1367
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Mr. Haldane	1338	*Mr. Harry Foster*	1372
Col. Williams	1344	*Mr. E. Robertson*	1376
Mr. S. Evans	1347	*Mr. J. A. Pease*	1379
Mr. Cohen	1351	*Sir W. Harcourt*	1382
Mr. Channing	1353	*Secretary for the Colonies*	1401
Mr. Johnstone	1359	*Mr. McLeod*	1409
Mr. Broadhurst	1362	[*Mr. Speaker*, 1343, 1366, 1380, 1409, 1410]	
Mr. Drage	1365		

Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."—The House divided:—Ayes, 283; Noes, 99.—(Division List—No. 17—appended) 1411

Bill to provide for a Grant out of the Exchequer in aid of Voluntary Elementary Schools, and for the exemption from rates of those schools, and to repeal part of Section 19 of the Elementary Education Act 1876; presented accordingly, and Read the First time —(119)... 1415

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1415

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1415

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Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1415

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1415

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MOTION.

Working Men's Dwellings (No. 2) Bill:—To facilitate the acquisition by Working Men of their own Dwellings,—Presented, and Read the First time. —(120) 1416

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COMMITTEE OF SELECTION APPOINTED 1417

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.]:—Read 2ª (according to Order) 1417

Local Government (Elections) Bill:—Second Reading (which stands appointed for Monday next) put off 1417

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NEW WRIT:—For the County of Surrey (Chertsey Division), *v.* Charles Harvey Combe, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.—*(Sir William Walrond)*... 1417

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA:—Special Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read—[No. 64] 1417

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1418

POSTAL FACILITIES (CO. LONGFORD)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1419

EVICTION (CO. LEITRIM)—Question, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1419

QUARANTINE—Questions, Sir William Wedderburn and Sir Walter Foster; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1420

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT (PARTICULARS SECTION)—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Home Secretary 1422

ROAD CONTRACTS (CO. LEITRIM)—Question, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland... 1422

LANE FOX ESTATE (CO. LEITRIM)—Questions, Mr. Patrick M'Hugh and Mr. Flynn; Answers, Attorney General for Ireland 1423

CASTLEPOLLARD PETTY SESSIONS—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1423

FAIR RENT AGREEMENTS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland... 1425

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION (CLONES, CO. MONAGHAN) — Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1425

AMALGAMATION OF POOR LAW UNIONS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1425

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION (LETTERGULLEN, CO. LONGFORD)—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1426

LABOURERS' ACTS (CO. LONGFORD)—Questions, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland... 1426

CHARGE OF LARCENY (CO. CORK)—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1427

ENNISKILLEN FUSILIERS (ENLISTMENT)—Question, Mr. Hammond; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1427

SEED RATE (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Crean; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1428

INLAND MONEY ORDERS—Questions, Mr. Luttrell; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1428

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Question, Sir Albert Rollit; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1429

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ADVANCE TO THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT—Questions, Mr. J. Morley; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1430
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EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS—Question, Mr. MacNeill; Answer, Home Secretary 1431
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IMPORTATION OF DRUGS (CEYLON)—Questions, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answers, Secretary of State for the Colonies 1433
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POOR LAW SCHOOLS (METROPOLIS)—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1433
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QUEEN'S REIGN (TREASON-FELONY PRISONERS)—Question, Mr. MacNeill; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1435
NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, First Lord of the Treasury 1435

MOTIONS.

Registration of Parliamentary Voters Bill:—To amend the Law with respect to the Registration of Voters for Parliamentary Elections; presented and Read the First time.—(121) 1436
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill:—To amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts; presented, and Read the First time.—(122) 1436
Smaller Dwellings (Scotland) Bill:—Bill to amend the Law in reference to the system of House Letting in Scotland; presented, and Read the First time.—(123) ... 1436
Registration of Firms Bill:—For the Registration of Firms; presented, and Read the First time.—(124) 1436
NEW WRIT:—For the Borough of Glasgow (Bridgeton Division) *v.* Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Baronet, Manor of Northstead.—*(Mr. Thomas Ellis)* 1436
SUPPLY (POINT OF ORDER):—*(Mr. Gibson Bowles)* 1437
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ...1438]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY:—Considered in Committee—

CIVIL SERVICES, 1896-7—EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed—

> "That a sum, not exceeding £798,802, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for a Grant in Aid of the Expenditure incurred in connection with the Egyptian Expedition to Dongola." 1439

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Amendment proposed, to reduce the Vote by £72,500—(*Mr. Knox*) ... 1489

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 29; Noes, 139.—(Division List—No. 18—appended) 1494

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Army Supplementary Estimate, 1896–7—Indian Troops at Suakim. £145,000, Pay, etc., of Indian Troops at Suakim 1521

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next 1524

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1524

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:—On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill—*(Dr. Farquharson)* 1524

Sir M. Stewart ...	... 1525	*Mr. Haldane*	... 1526
Mr. Buchanan ...	... 1525	*Mr. Dalziel*	... 1527
Mr. A. Cross ...	... 1526	*Solicitor General* ...	... 1527

Debate adjourned; to be resumed upon Monday next 1527

Berriew School Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1528

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1528

Ways and Means:—Committee deferred 1528

Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1528

Shop Assistants (Half-Holiday) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1528

Business of the House:—On the Motion, "That this House do now adjourn"—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury... 1528

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Indian Famine:—

Lord Kinnaird ...	... 1529	*Under Secretary for India*	... 1532

COMMONS: MONDAY, 8th FEBRUARY 1897.

QUESTIONS.

Foreign-made Prison Goods—Questions, Sir Howard Vincent; Answers, President of the Board of Trade 1534

Post Office Savings Bank (Accounts)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1534

Postal and Telegraph Services (Revenue)—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury 1535

Importation of Spirits (Sierra Leone)—Question, Admiral Field, Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1535

Finner Rifle Range (Co. Donegal)—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1536

St. Helena—Questions, Admiral Field; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer 1537

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EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. William Abraham (Cork Co., N.E.), Mr. Dillon and Captain Donelan; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1537
SCHOOL TEXT-BOOKS (SCOTLAND)—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Lord Advocate 1539
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DISTRESS (LISTOWEL UNION)—Question, Mr. Austin; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1541
MILITARY WORKS BILL—Questions, Mr. Monk and Mr. Lough; Answers, Under Secretary for War 1541
BARRACKS ACT, 1890—Questions, Mr. Lough, Mr. Knox, and Mr. MacNeill; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1542
NORTHAMPTON PRISON (ADVERTISEMENTS)—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Home Secretary 1543
IRISH MAILS—Questions, Mr. Roche, Captain Donelan, and Mr. Knox; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury 1544
LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—Question, Dr. Ambrose; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1545
FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1545
ARABI PASHA—Questions, Mr. Davitt and Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1546
EXPLOSION OF CORDITE (WOOLWICH ARSENAL)—Question, Mr. Egerton; Answer, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1546
SALE OF FIREARMS AND SPIRITS IN NEW HEBRIDES—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs 1547
SETTLED PROPERTY (ESTATE DUTY)—Question, Captain Pretyman; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1547
CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, President of the Local Government Board 1548
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ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RATING)—Questions, Mr. Griffith; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1550
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POOR LAW SCHOOLS (METROPOLIS)—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, President of the Local Government Board 1552
ARMY RETIRED PAY—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Financial Secretary to the War Office 1554
LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Davitt; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1554
MORTALITY (CENTRAL INDIA PROVINCES)—Question, Mr. Davitt; Answer, Secretary of State for India 1555
WORKMISTRESSES (IRISH SCHOOLS)—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1556
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RELIEF OF KASSALA—Questions, Mr. MacNeill; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs [Mr. Speaker] 1557

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ILLEGAL TRAWLING (CORK)—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. Power; Answers, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1559
CRETE—Questions, Mr. Flynn, Sir E. Ashmead Bartlett, and Mr. Dillon; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs [Mr. Speaker] 1559
FACTORY ACCIDENT, BATLEY—Question, Sir C. Dilke; Answer, Attorney General 1562
ROYAL BOUNTY FUND (GEORGE BROOKS)—Questions, Mr. Davitt and Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 1562
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir William Harcourt, Sir J. Colomb, and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury [Mr. Speaker] 1563

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY:—Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" 1565

MILITARY FORCES (MAINTENANCE):—Amendment proposed to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words—

"this House, while ready to provide the funds required for the efficient maintenance of our Military forces, desires to be convinced that the present system of enlistment and terms of service are such as to be suitable to the requirements of the Empire."—(*Sir C. Dilke*)... 1565

Major Rasch 1578
Under Secretary for War 1582
Sir H. Havelock-Allan ... 1591
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman... 1593
Mr. Brookfield 1598
Sir J. Colomb 1601
General McCalmont ... 1605
Sir E. Gourley 1608
Colonel Sandys 1609
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[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1614]
First Lord of the Treasury ... 1615
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1615
Mr. W. Allan 1618
Colonel Welby... 1619
Mr. Warner 1622
General Russell 1623
Mr. Webster 1624

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."—The House divided:—Ayes, 197; Noes, 63.—(Division List—No. 20—appended) 1626

BRIGADE OF GUARDS:—

Colonel Lockwood ... 1629
Lord A. Compton ... 1632
Captain Bagot... 1635

Debate adjourned 1636

SUPPLY:—Committee upon Wednesday 1636

Military Works (Money) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1637

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned 1637

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1637

WAYS AND MEANS:—Committee deferred... 1637

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SUPPLY [5TH FEBRUARY]:—Resolutions reported—
CIVIL SERVICES, 1896–7.—(1) Egyptian Government (Grant in Aid) ... 1637
ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY.—(2) Pay, etc., of Indian Troops at Suakim ... 1637
Resolutions agreed to 1637

Trusts (Scotland) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1637

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1637

Unlawful Possession Bill:—Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [29th January] further adjourned 1638

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill:—Second Reading deferred ... 1638

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill:—
Motion made, "That the House do now go into Committee on this Bill."—(*Mr. Begg*) 1638
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1638]
House in Committee.—Clause 1,—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday 23rd June 1639

Factory Acts (Fishing Trade) Bill:—Committee deferred 1639

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill:—Second Reading deferred 1639

MOTIONS.

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill:—Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Constitution of the District Councils of Aldershot and Farnborough —(125) 1639

Railway Return Tickets Bill:—Bill for enacting that all Railway Return Tickets be available for return journeys any time during the year of issue—(126) ... 1639

Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill:—Bill to amend the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Act—(127) 1639

Voluntary Schools Bill:—On the Motion "That this House do now adjourn" ... 1639
Questions, Mr. Lough, Mr. Bartley, and Mr. Carvell Williams; Answers, First Lord of the Treasury 1639

END OF VOL. XLV.

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Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Access to Mountains (Scotland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Accountants (Scotland)	Read 1°, Jan. 27.
Agricultural Holdings	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Agricultural Produce (Marks)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Aliens	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Assistant County Surveyors (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Benefices	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Benefices (No. 3)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Berriew School	Read 1°, Feb. 1.
Board of Guardians and Labourers (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Boiler Inspection and Registration	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Borough Funds	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Building Feus and Leases (Scotland)	Read 1°, Feb. 1.
Burials	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Cemeteries Rating	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Coal Mines Regulation	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Companies	Read 1ª, Feb. 1.
Corn Sales	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
County Councillors (Qualification of Women) (Scotland)	Read 1°, Jan. 25.
County Courts	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
County Surveyors (Ireland) Act Amendment	Read 1°, Feb. 2.
Court of Criminal Appeal	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment	Read 1°, Feb. 2.
Education Acts Amendment	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Educational Endowment (Ireland) Act (1885) Amendment	In Committee, Feb. 3.
Election Petitions	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Elementary Education (Permissive Rates Aid)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Employers' Liability (Foreign Shipowners) Amendments	Read 1°, Jan. 26.
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Evicted Tenants (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Factory Acts (Fishery Trade)	In Committee, Feb. 3.
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Gold and Silver Plate Licences	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Grocers' Certificates (Scotland) Abolition	Read 1°, Jan. 26.
Industrial and Provident and Incorporated Building Societies (Purchase of Fee Simple)	Read 1°, Jan. 27.
Industries (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 29.
Injuries to Workmen (Employers' Liability)	Read 1°, Feb. 2.
Labour Bureaux	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Labourers' Cottages (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 25.
Land Law (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Land Law (Ireland) (No. 2)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Land Tenure (Wales and Monmouthshire)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Land Values (Towns) Assessment	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases)	Read 1°, Jan. 29.
Law of Libel Amendment	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Leaseholders' Purchase of Fee Simple	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Leaseholders' Purchase of Fee Simple (No. 2)	Read 1°, Jan. 27.
Licences (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Liquor Traffic Local Veto	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation	Read 1°, Jan. 25.
Local Government Act (1894) Amendment	Read 1°, Jan. 27.
Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough)	Read 1°, Feb. 8.
Local Government Elections	Read 1ª, Feb. 4.
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1)	Read 1°, Jan. 20.
London (Borough Road, Southwark) Provisional Order	Read 1°, Jan. 20.
London (Churchway, St. Pancras) Provisional Order	Read 1°, Jan. 20.
London (Clare Market, Strand) Provisional Order	Read 1°, Feb. 3.
London Water Companies Amalgamation	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Manhood Suffrage (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Marine Insurance	Read 1ª, Feb. 4.
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Married Persons Small Industrial Incomes (Tax Relief)	Read 1°, Feb. 1.
Members of Parliament (Vacation of Seats)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment	Second Reading Negatived, Jan. 27.
Merchant Shipping Act Amendment	Read 1°, Jan. 27.
Metropolitan Police Provisional Order	Read 1°, Feb. 3.
Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment	Read 1°, Feb. 1.
Military Works	Read 1°, Feb. 1.
Militia	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Mines (Eight Hours)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Municipal Franchise (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Municipal Franchise (Ireland) (No. 2)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Occupying Tenants' Enfranchisement (Purchase of Fee Simple)	Read 1°, Feb. 1.
Old Age Provident Pensions	Read 1°, Jan. 26.
Outdoor Provident Relief	Read 1°, Jan. 26.
Outlawries	Read 1°, Jan. 19.
Parish Registers	Read 1°, Jan. 26.
Parliamentary Elections (Mariners' Votes)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women)	In Committee, Feb. 8.
Parliamentary Franchise (Women) [H.L.]	Read 1ª, Feb. 1.
Parliamentary Registration Amendment	Withdrawn, Jan. 25.
Pensions (Old Age)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Places of Worship (Leasehold) Enfranchisement	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Plumbers' Registration	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Police (Scotland) Law Amendment	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Poor Law Franchise (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act (1896) Amendment	Read 1°, Jan. 22.
Poor Law Officers' Superannuation (Ireland)	Read 1°, Jan. 26.

Title of Bill.	*Progress.*
Post Office Consolidation	Read 2ª, Feb. 5.
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment (No. 2)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Public Health (Scotland)	Debate on Second Reading, Feb. 5.
Railway Return Tickets	Read 1º, Feb. 8.
Rating of Machinery	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Rating of Machinery Suspensory	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Rating (Places of Worship and Schools)	Read 1º, Jan, 22.
Registration of Firms	Read 1º, Feb. 5.
Registration of Parliamentary Votes	Read 1º, Feb. 5.
Rivers Pollution Prevention	Read 1º, Jan. 26.
Sale of Food and Drugs	Read 1º, Jan. 27.
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment	Read 1º, Feb. 5.
School Board Electorate (Scotland)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
School Board for London (Elections)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Sea Fisheries (Scotland)	Read 1º, Feb. 8.
Select Vestries	Read 1ª, Jan. 19.
Service Franchise	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Shop Assistants (Half Holiday)	Read 1º, Feb. 2.
Shops	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Shops (Early Closing)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Smaller Dwellings (Scotland)	Read 1º, Feb. 5.
Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Street Noises	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Succession (Scotland)	Read 1º, Feb. 3.
Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment	Debate on Second Reading, Jan. 27.
Surveyors (County Dublin)	Read 1º, Jan. 25.
Teind Court (Scotland)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Tenant Right in Towns (Ireland)	Read 1º, Jan. 27.
Thompson's Divorce	Read 1ª, Feb. 1.
Truck Acts Amendment	Read 1º, Feb. 3.
Trusts (Scotland)	Read 1º, Feb. 4.
University Education (Ireland)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Unlawful Possession	Debate on Second Reading, Jan. 29.
Vehicles (Lights)	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Voluntary Schools	Read 1º, Feb. 4.
Working Men's Dwellings	Read 1º, Jan. 22.
Working Men's Dwellings (No. 2)	Read 1º, Feb. 4.

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(Authorised Edition)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT* OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*
APPOINTED TO MEET JANUARY 19, 1897, IN THE SIXTIETH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1897.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 19th January 1897.

THE THIRD SESSION OF THE FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT of Her Majesty the Queen, and the Twenty-sixth of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, was opened by Commission at Two of the clock.

COMMISSION.

Five LORDS COMMISSIONERS—the Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury), Viscount Cross (Lord Privy Seal), the Earl of Pembroke (Lord Steward of the Household), Lord Balfour (Secretary for Scotland), and the Earl of Kintore (Lord-in-Waiting)—(being in their Robes and seated on a Bench between the Throne and the Woolsack)—commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod (General Sir Michael A. S. Biddulph) to let the Commons know that—

> "The Lords Commissioners desire their immediate attendance in this House to hear the Commission read."

The Commons being at the Bar, with their Speaker:—

The Commission was read by the Clerk of the Parliaments (Mr. Henry J. L. Graham). Then:—

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

The LORD CHANCELLOR delivered Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, as follows:—

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"My relations with all the other Powers continue to be of a friendly character.

"The appalling massacres which have taken place in Constantinople and in other parts of the Ottoman Dominions have called for the special attention of the Powers who were Signatories to the

Treaty of Paris. Papers will be laid before you showing the considerations which have induced the Powers to make the present condition of the Ottoman Empire the subject of special consultation by their Representatives at Constantinople. The conferences which the Six Ambassadors have been instructed to hold are still proceeding.

"The action undertaken by His Highness the Khedive of Egypt against the Khalifa, with my approval and assistance, has so far been entirely successful. His forces, supported by my officers and troops, have won back the fertile Province of Dongola to civilisation by operations conducted with remarkable skill, and the way has been opened for a further advance whenever such a step shall be judged to be desirable.

"My Government have discussed with the United States, acting as the friend of Venezuela, the terms under which the pending questions of disputed frontier between that Republic and my Colony of British Guiana may be equitably submitted to arbitration. An arrangement has been arrived at with that Government which will, I trust, effect the adjustment of existing controversies without exposing to risk the interests of any Colonists who have established rights in the disputed territory.

"It is with much gratification that I have concluded a Treaty for General Arbitration with the President of the United States, by which I trust that all differences that may arise between us will be peacefully adjusted. I hope that this arrangement may have a further value in commending to other Powers the consideration of a principle by which the danger of war may be notably abated.

"The rebellion in Matabeleland and Mashonaland has been repressed by the steadfastness and courage of the settlers, reinforced by my troops and by volunteers, both of English and Dutch race, from other parts of South Africa. I deplore the loss of valuable lives which these operations have entailed.

"The depressed condition of the sugar industry in my West Indian Colonies has seriously affected their prosperity, and I have appointed a Commission to investigate its causes, and, if possible, to suggest means for its amelioration.

"It is with much regret and with feelings of the deepest sympathy that I have heard that, owing to the failure of the autumn rains, scarcity and famine affect a large portion of my Dominions in India. My Government in that country are making every effort to mitigate suffering and to lessen the calamity. The development of railways and irrigation works, and the forethought given through a long series of years to the preparation of the most effective arrangements for alleviating distress caused by famine, make their task more hopeful than in previous visitations. My people throughout my Dominions at home and in India have been invited to second with their liberality the exertions of my Government. Papers showing the extent of the famine, and the measures taken to relieve suffering, will be laid before you.

"Plague has also made its appearance in the seaport towns of Bombay and Karachi, and, notwithstanding the precautions adopted by the local authorities, shows no signs of decrease. I have directed my Government to take the most stringent measures at their disposal for the eradication of the pestilence.

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"The Estimates for the year will be laid before you. While desirous of guarding against undue expenditure, I have felt that the present condition of the world will not permit you to depart from the spirit of prudent foresight in which you have during recent years provided for the defence of my Empire.

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"A measure for the Promotion of Primary Education, by securing the Maintenance of Voluntary Schools, will be laid before you. If time permits, you will be invited to consider further proposals for Educational Legislation.

"It is desirable to make better provision for the compensation of workpeople who suffer from accidents in the course of their employment, and a Bill, having that object in view, will be submitted to you.

"Your consent will be asked to provisions which, in the judgment of the military authorities, are required for adding to the efficiency of the military defences of the Empire.

"A Bill will be submitted to you to improve the arrangements for water supply in this metrópolis.

"In order to promote the interests of agriculture, which are of paramount importance in Ireland, you will be asked to consider a Bill for the establishment of a Board of Agriculture in that country.

"Further legislative proposals will be brought before you, if the time at your disposal suffices for the purpose.

"Bills for admitting the evidence of accused persons, for amending the law with respect to bills of sale and the registration of land, for revising the Acts with respect to the formation and administration of limited Companies, for the amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act in Great Britain, for the exclusion of the goods manufactured in the prisons of other countries, for the establishment of Reformatories for Inebriates, and for amending the existing procedure with respect to private Bills coming from Scotland and Ireland, have been prepared, and, if opportunity for considering them should be found, will be laid before you.

"I heartily commend your important deliberations to the guidance of Almighty God."

Then the Commons withdrew.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed at Four of the Clock.

PRAYERS.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

Norroy King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Third Session of the Twenty-sixth Parliament of the United Kingdom. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

SAT FIRST.

The Marquess of Bath—after the death of his father.

The Earl Sondes—after the death of his father.

PEERS INTRODUCED.

Augustus Lord Bishop of Lichfield.

Frederick Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mandell Lord Bishop of London.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, pro formâ, read 1ª.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR delivered the Report of HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH from the Throne.

THE MARQUESS OF BATH, who wore the uniform of an officer of Yeomanry Cavalry, rose, amid cheers, to move "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for her Gracious Speech from the Throne." He said: I have to crave the indulgence of your Lordships for the position in which I find myself, for not only is this the first time I have had the honour of addressing your Lordships, but I believe I might count myself the youngest Member of the House, this being the first occasion on which I have had the privilege of occupying my seat on these Benches. I trust I shall not be transgressing any unwritten laws or traditions if I venture to refer to a subject which naturally has found no place in the Gracious Speech from the Throne. Ten years ago it was my privilege on a similar occasion, and in another place, to express the hope that no cloud should cast its shadow over the celebration of the 50th year of Her Majesty's glorious reign. Standing in this place, might I say that we look forward shortly to the completion of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign, when we hope to celebrate with her an event unique in the annals of this country—the fact that she has surpassed in the length of her reign that of any of her predecessors on the English Throne? [*Cheers.*] I will leave to others of greater authority and experience, and it might be on a more befitting occasion, the task of dwelling upon the splendid qualities of head and heart which have enabled Her Majesty to stamp the Victorian Era with the indelible impress of her own character. [*Cheers.*] The outrages and massacres in the Ottoman Empire have shocked all Christendom, but, terrible as the condition of things has been, I can conceive something more terrible still. I can imagine the annihilation of the Armenian population in the event of a European war, owing to the refusal of any one or two Powers to act in concert, in preservation of the provisions of the Treaty of Paris. A European war under such circumstances would indeed be horror heaped upon horror's head. We are told that the conferences of the Ambassadors at Constantinople are still proceeding, but I trust that in his efforts to induce the Powers to act, as well as to deliberate and remonstrate in concert with one another, the noble Lord, the Prime Minister, will be backed, as he has hitherto been, by the sympathy and strength of a united nation. [*Cheers.*] I venture to say that the announcement as to the recent Egyptian campaign will receive general approval. To restore to civilisation the Soudanese territories, which 13 years ago were lost to Egypt under such tragic circumstances, cannot fail to win the sympathy and assent of English people. Your Lordships will share with Her Majesty the great gratification she has expressed at the conclusion of the Treaty for general arbitration with the late President of the United States. [*Cheers.*] If the eminent diplomatist of that country is happy in carrying away with him the consciousness that this great badge of friendship has been secured during his term of office, so among the many diplomatic achievements which history will lay to the credit of the noble Lord at the head of Her Majesty's Government there is none that will add greater lustre than the record of his connection with the negotiations which led to the execution of this Treaty. [*Cheers.*] The Treaty has given new force and fresh colour to the well-known statement that "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." ["Hear, hear!"] Your Lordships, I am sure, thoroughly share the regret of Her Majesty that her Indian Empire should have been visited by the terrible joint calamities of famine and pestilence. The nation would expect that nothing that activity in preparation or abundance in provision can secure shall be neglected in order that those painful scourges shall be kept within bounds. The appeal which has been made to Her Majesty's subjects at home and in India to second by their liberality the exertions of the Government has met with a prompt and a noble response, and the channel of generous sympathy will, I am sure, flow with a flood no less strong than marked its course 20 years ago. But amid the grief that has been universally aroused by the dread tidings from India there is one consolation, and that is that many years has elapsed since that country has been afflicted with the horrors of famine, which I believe in former times were more rare in their absence than in their occurrence. ["Hear, hear!"] The increased facilities of transport, the fruits of scientific investigation, and the improvement in organisation—in itself the result of long and painful experience—must tend to alleviate the sufferings which the marvellously patient inhabitants of India endure from these fearful visitations. ["Hear, hear!"] Her Majesty's Ministers have, I venture to say, put forward a list of domestic legislation which avoids the taint of being over ambitious, and at the same time promises to be possible and, therefore, practicable. Their recognition that the condition of the world demands prudent foresight and the statement that they contemplate adding to our military defences will meet at the hands of the country that same patriotic support with which their former proposals for improving the condition of the naval defences of our Empire were received. [*Cheers.*] I have the honour, my Lords, to move the following humble Address to Her Majesty:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign, we, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Majesty for the gracious speech which your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

*LORD KENYON (who wore the uniform of an officer of Shropshire Yeomanry Cavalry) said: My Lords, your Lordships will, I feel confident, extend to me that consideration which your courtesy never refuses to one who addresses you for the first time. I am deeply sensible of the honour conferred upon me in being permitted to second the Address, which has been proposed by the noble Marquess, more especially in this auspicious year, when we are to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Her Most Gracious Majesty's glorious reign—a reign that has now been extended to a greater length than has been permitted to any other English Sovereign. I should only weary your Lordships were I to dwell on the numberless inventions during this period that have contributed to the comfort, prosperity, and progress of mankind. The most striking feature of all must be the length of time that we have enjoyed the blessing of peace with our European neighbours—a peace that we trust will not be broken. As a Welshman, I may, perhaps, be permitted to assert with perfect confidence that in no part of Her Majesty's dominions is a deep and loyal devotion to her office and her person more conspicuous than in the Principality of Wales. Whether we look at home or abroad, whether we mark the vast expansion of territory and influence which has accrued to this Empire during the period which we are now invited to celebrate; or whether our attention is concentrated on an aspect of the matter, perhaps more gratifying still to Her Majesty and to your Lordships—I mean the vast improvements, social and moral, which are identified with the stately progress of the reign—in either case or from either aspect, we must acknowledge the present year to be an era in the history of this country and a marvellous consummation of the efforts of statesmanship as complete as the history of the world can supply. I feel sure I am only anticipating the wishes of your Lordships if I add that it is the earnest prayer of every one of us that a reign so pure, so beneficent, so glorious, may yet be extended to the longest possible period consistent with the designs of a wise and over-ruling Providence; and I venture to assure Her Majesty that in the twilight, as through the morning and the noontide of her illustrious life, she may rely upon the unwavering affection and support of your Lordships' House. My noble Friend has dealt so fully with foreign affairs that I feel I should be wasting the time of your Lordships' House if I were to add to his remarks. There is, however, one matter to which my noble Friend has only made a passing reference. Your Lordships will remember how suddenly a comparatively modest country rose into prominence, owing to the assertion by America of a right to intervene in a dispute that had lingered on for some years. So decided was this assertion that there even seemed a bare possibility of war—of a war that would have been almost a civil war—a war between two nations speaking the same language, professing the same faith, sprung from a common stock. Happily such a contingency seems now to have passed away. The disputed frontier between Venezuela and British Guiana is in a fair way to have its limits settled, whilst those colonists whose rights are established will have their interests safeguarded. And out of this question has arisen an opportunity for the conclusion of the Treaty for General Arbitration—a Treaty that we hope may be a bond of union with our natural allies—the United States of America. This new factor in the relation betwixt nations, which has been so quietly accomplished, still needs ratification by the Senate, but we may trust that no influence of party politics or other reason may stand in the way of the peace of nations. It is to be hoped that this Treaty may be the forerunner of other like Treaties with our European neighbours. May I here be permitted to add my humble congratulations, which will find an echo on all sides, to the noble Marquess on the firmness and clear judgment he has given evidence of in this matter? Since this time last year many complications have arisen which have militated against the welfare of our South African possessions. However, the present outlook is brighter, and your Lordships will observe with real gratification that though there has been an inevitable and deplorable loss of valuable life, there is now a prospect of a return to settled government and prosperity. We are glad to see that there is to be no relaxation of effort to maintain our Navy at the highest possible state of efficiency, while at the same time efforts are to be made to make the Army adequate, both in numbers and training, to meet our continually increasing responsibilities all over the world, and also to provide for further protection of our coaling stations and harbours—defensive measures of the highest importance. Turning to home affairs, we may hope to see that thorny question of relief to Voluntary Schools settled in the simplest manner, and I venture to hope that the children educated in these schools may be enabled to receive the same standard of teaching that prevails in Board Schools, whilst obtaining the advantage of such religious instruction as their parents may desire. If time permits, some attempt will be made to provide a scheme of Secondary Education. Here may I be allowed to record the gratitude which the people of Wales feel to the various Governments which have made their scheme of education consistent and complete? Further, they welcome with gratification the fact that their Prince was pleased to accept the highest honour they could offer him in becoming Chancellor of the University. Your Lordships may think that Wales is a kind of Cerberus, but I can testify, from personal knowledge, that her people now think the time has come when she may fairly be allowed to claim a share of the Museum Grant, which would add a fresh incentive to study at the three University Colleges. Employers and employed will look forward to a measure which will secure to workpeople who may suffer from accidents adequate compensation without interfering with contracts already made between masters and men—honourable and generous on the part of the former, and welcome and satisfactory to the latter. I trust that the Opposition will view with pleasure the measure of Home Rule to Ireland in Agriculture. I hope that we shall not be over-confident if we presume that the upward turn in the barometer of matters agricultural is steady and permanent. I observe among the possibilities a Bill to Amend the Agricultural Holdings Act. I have had the honour to serve recently on a Commission which has been for some time occupied in an inquiry into matters connected with land and its culture in a portion of these Islands, and here may I be permitted to observe that notwithstanding the somewhat scathing examination to which the landlords of Wales were exposed the impression was firmly imprinted on our minds that in the main the treatment of the tenants throughout the Principality has been absolutely just—may I not even say generous? May I hope that a proportion of the conclusions which some of my colleagues and myself have arrived at may find a place in the Bill to Amend the Agricultural Holdings Act? It appeared to us that if the Act is to be of any service at all its machinery must be simplified. We consider that disputes involving legal interference might be more easily conducted under the Arbitration Acts in the same manner that trade and other differences have been settled. Landlords and tenants, I believe, would welcome greater uniformity of treatment. We adhere most emphatically, however, to the British love of freedom of contract. We believe that in most cases all differences can be settled amicably without reference to any Court, and though we would like to see the possibilities of tenants obtaining relief under the Act made easier, we hold that any reference to a legal form of Arbitration should be only in the last resort. I must offer you my grateful thanks for the patience and kind consideration with which you have listened to me, and in seconding the Motion for the Address I am confident that your Lordships will respond loyally to the Royal Message which Her Majesty to-day has conveyed to her faithful Parliament. [*Cheers.*]

The Earl of KIMBERLEY, who on rising was cheered by both sides of the House, said: My Lords,—In rising on the present occasion to speak on behalf of my Friends on this side of the House, I cannot but express my deep regret that we are no longer led by my noble Friend Lord Rosebery, whose wit and eloquence I am sure always commanded the admiration of all parties in this House, and whose place I am only too conscious I can but very inadequately fill. But I am encouraged by the recollection of the great indulgence and kindness which when I formerly occupied this position I received from all parts of the House. [*Cheers.*] Before proceeding to the matters in the Speech, I think your Lordships will not be surprised that I should express my deep regret that we have lost the late Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the most distinguished members of this House, whose high qualities must insure him a place of honour on that illustrious roll of the Primates of the English Church, and I may say that his genial qualities and his invariable kindness endeared him to all who had the honour of his acquaintance. ["Hear, hear!"] Nor can I omit to refer to two familiar faces which we miss on this occasion—I mean those of Lord Limerick and Lord Kensington, both of whom will long be regretted by a large and most attached circle of friends. ["Hear, hear!"] My Lords, I have now to do that which is the most agreeable portion of the task which I have to perform—namely, to congratulate the noble Lord who moved and the noble Lord who seconded the Address. Most of us remember the father of Lord Bath, and we recollect with what ability he often—not too often, alas!—addressed this House. It pleases me to see that his son also possesses qualities which will make him a valuable member of the House, for he addressed us with a taste and a moderation which I have seldom heard excelled by anyone who has moved the Address. ["Hear, hear!"] Nor can I fail to say that the Seconder of the Address did not fall short of him in the manner in which he addressed us. ["Hear, hear!"] It is a happy coincidence that the noble Marquess who moved the Address should have moved the Address in another place on the former auspicious occasion when Her Majesty celebrated her Jubilee. I, in common, I am sure, with other Members of this House, fully echo what he has said concerning our Gracious Queen. The subject of Her Majesty's reign might, indeed fill a long oration; but I will say only this, that besides the great events which have characterised that reign, there is something else which moves us even more nearly, and that is Her Majesty's own qualities and the universal affection which she has won from all her subjects—a feeling which extends even to all civilised nations throughout the world. That she may long live and long be our Sovereign must be, as the noble Marquess said, the earnest prayer of all her devoted subjects. [*Cheers.*] The Speech naturally contains a great deal upon the subject of foreign affairs, and perhaps for a long time there has not been a more anxious period than that during which Her Majesty's present Government have occupied their offices. I am glad to think that the noble Marquess who moved the Address may be justified in saying that there is some sign of improvement in the state of our relations with foreign nations. Upon one point there cannot be one moment's hesitation—I mean in welcoming that Treaty of Arbitration which has been concluded with the United States of America—["hear, hear!"]—and I, for my part, most sincerely and most warmly congratulate the noble Marquess opposite upon his having been able to bring to a successful close a negotiation which, I doubt not, was one of extreme difficulty and nicety. My Lords, it is not only that we welcome this Treaty, which we hope will prevent the possibility of any quarrel with our kindred in that great nation which constitutes the United States, but we feel also that an example has been set by the conclusion of this Treaty by two, I may venture to say, of the greatest nations in the world. This example must, I hope—nay, I think cannot fail to—have a lasting effect upon the policy of all the civilised nations of the world. Upon that subject there is a unanimous feeling of satisfaction throughout this country. The next paragraph to which I will allude is one also which I welcome with pleasure—namely, the announcement that Her Majesty's Government has been enabled to conclude a Treaty which will settle the Venezuelan difficulty. I might possibly criticise some of the preliminary steps by which that Treaty was preceded, but upon this occasion, when I think all parties view with the greatest satisfaction the termination of a controversy which at one time, it seemed, might have led to most disastrous consequences, I think it is more graceful, and better on all accounts, to refrain from such criticism, and simply to say that we welcome with pleasure the Treaty, and when we see all the details, we expect to find that the matter has been honourable and satisfactory to this country. I wish I could speak in the same manner on the next subject to which I have to refer, that of Armenia. It would be, I think, quite unnecessary upon this occasion to repeat the universal feeling of horror which has prevailed throughout the country at the massacres of the Armenians in the Turkish dominions. That feeling has been widely, I may say universally, expressed in this country. The real question which we have to consider to-day is, what is the position of this most unfortunate and most disastrous affair? We feel, and I think the whole country feels, that the time has come when we may reasonably expect from the noble Marquess opposite a full disclosure of the present position of this matter. I cannot say that I feel altogether encouragement from the terms in which the paragraph relating to this subject is couched, because in the first place it refers, rather to my astonishment, to the Treaty of Paris, and further it merely tells us that papers have been laid before us showing

> "the considerations which have induced the Powers to make the present condition of the Ottoman Empire the subject of special consultation by their representatives at Constantinople."

I do not suppose anybody whatever wants information on that subject; we all know the reasons, and very disastrous reasons they are, which have compelled the consideration by the Powers of the present condition of the Ottoman Empire; but what we want to know is, not that the matters have been under consideration, nor why the matters have been under consideration, but what the results of that consideration are, and what is the present position of the negotiations. The noble Marquess, in his very able speech at the Guildhall, refrained, I dare say with good reason, from giving any information of a detailed kind upon the subject, but he did make one statement which was of a reassuring character—he said that the Concert of Europe seemed to be in a more favourable position for achieving their purpose than it had ever been before. Well, we accepted that statement with pleasure, and what we now ask and press upon Her Majesty's Government, and what we believe to be the general wish of the whole country, is that they should tell us what are the circumstances which have enabled the noble Marquess to say so much, and to ask him also to say precisely what those negotiations have been. I referred to the Treaty of Paris, and I must say I was rather astonished to see the old Treaty of Paris, which is now 41 years old, brought in upon this occasion. I thought there had been a more recent Treaty—namely, the Treaty of Berlin. My Lords, I was more astonished because I remembered that in 1878 the noble Marquess spoke of the provisions of the Treaty of Paris as misty and visionary guarantees, and I confess that, looking to the whole course of history since the conclusion of that Treaty, I conceive that what is more remarkable than anything is the extent to which that Treaty has been broken. But it is true the position of the Russians in their war was, to a certain extent, ratified by the Treaty of Berlin except in certain provisions which were omitted. This was the result of a war which took place without certainly the assent of the various Powers who concluded the Treaty of 1856, and it certainly resulted in a most extensive violation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. We all know that at that time, as Lord Beaconsfield said, the process of the consolidation of the Ottoman Empire was carried on by cutting off some of its most important members. But, my Lords, the noble Marquess went on to say that there had been substituted for these visionary and misty guarantees another Treaty, and that, I think he said, was a simple form of engagement in which only two Powers were concerned, and the pledges involved were sure to be fulfilled. What has become of that Treaty? What were its provisions? Your Lordships probably know. They were, no doubt, simple. In the first place, the Ottoman Government agreed, or rather promised, that there should be reforms as regarded Armenia. On our part we engaged to defend the Turks if attacked in Asia Minor by Russia; and to enable us to perform that engagement we received possession of Cyprus. Has the condition of the Armenians been reformed? Instead of that they have been massacred. Are we about, at any time, to defend the Turks from the Russians in Asia Minor? I do not believe there is a single man in this country who would now venture to call upon this country to recur to what the Noble Marquess justly called "that antiquated policy." Nothing remains except our possession of the Island of Cyprus, the advantages of which to this country have never been very clear, and I confess I should very much like to hear an authoritative declaration from the Government as to the present position of that Treaty. Is it entirely dead, in their opinion, or does any part of it exist? If so, is there any intention on the part of any one to carry it into effect? It may not be quite out of place if, in a few words, I refer to the general features of the policy of this country in the Levant. You know—I remember it well—that for many years the policy of this country was to induce the Ottoman Government to reform, hoping that by reform we might put off for ever that terrible problem of what might happen on the break up of the Ottoman Empire. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not think all the opprobrium which has been cast upon that policy is deserved, because I imagine there is no man in Europe who has ever been in any way responsible for affairs who does not look with the deepest apprehension on what must happen whenever that break up takes place. That being so, I think the Statesmen of the past were justified perhaps, hoping against hope, in using every possible endeavour to prevent that catastrophe by inducing the Ottoman Government to introduce such tolerable reforms of government, not only as regards Christians, but Mahomedans, for I am sure the sympathies of the people of this country are not confined to the Christians, but we wish that the Mahomedans, in whom we have an interest as the greatest Mahomedan Power in the world, should also be well governed. The Statesmen of the past certainly had justification for their policy, but, unfortunately, history has shown that that policy has signally failed. It has completely failed, because the administration of the Ottoman Empire seems to be full of incurable defects, which render it practically impossible to carry into effect reforms which may be put on paper and look plausible, but which, unless carried out by honest and efficient instruments, can have no permanent or lasting effect. In these circumstances I cannot take otherwise than—as the noble Marquess must take—a gloomy view of the situation. Doubtless in our present position we are thrown back on the old attempt to induce the Sultan, who really is the Government of Turkey, to in some way ameliorate the condition of the people whom he oppresses. If the noble Marquess can tell us that progress has been made, I am confident there is no man in this House who will not hear it with the liveliest satisfaction. Much has been said with regard to our relations in the East with Russia, and it may be that the difficulty of conducting these relations—I am afraid it must be—has been increased by the remembrance Russia has of how she was thwarted by the Berlin Treaty, which I always regarded as a most unfortunate instrument. She, no doubt, has deeply felt that when she was in a position to secure it to the Armenians she was constrained by the other Powers to retire from the position she won at the expense of much blood and treasure. But I will not waste time in useless regrets about the past. The real question is, What can be done in the present? And I welcome the expression of opinion which the noble Marquess gave in picturesque phrase that opposition to Russia in the East was an antiquated policy.

*THE PRIME MINISTER (THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY): I do not think I used precisely those words.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Any opposition, I think you said, or antagonism on the part of this country.

*THE PRIME MINISTER: I said I thought the selection of Russia from among other Powers as a Power to which this country should be in opposition was antiquated.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Quite so. I understood the noble Marquess meant that it was an antiquated policy to consider Russia as specially antagonistic to this country. I regard that—I do not say as an admission—but as a declaration of great value, and in my humble way I assure the noble Marquess that I entirely agree with it. As far as I was able during the short time I had the honour to hold the post that the noble Marquess now holds, I endeavoured to act on that principle. The noble Marquess knows I made every effort to obtain the co-operation of Russia in this matter. Up to a certain point I obtained it. I acted not only because I think our relations with Russia in the East are the key of the whole position, but I was desirous of making it plain to the Russian Government that, whatever had been the past, it was the object of this country to act with Russia in the future. My hopes were disappointed. There came a moment—as the papers which have been laid before the House show clearly—when the Russian Government was not prepared to go any further with us in the direction in which we desired to move. In these circumstances, no doubt, the course the noble Marquess has taken of invoking the assistance of all the Powers is the only alternative which remained. Has he had any success in that effort? Although I cannot prejudge our opinion when we see the papers, I will say on my own behalf, and on the behalf of all who share our opinions, that I believe we shall find the noble Marquess has spared no effort to obtain, if possible, some distinct and plain remedy for the terrible evils under which the subjects of the Sultan now suffer. In that hope I rest and say no more. But I feel that the subject is one of far-reaching importance, not only because of the condition of the Christian population in Armenia, but of the danger to all Europe of the condition of the Ottoman Empire. The noble Marquess will have recognised on the part of those opposed to the Government that there has not been the slightest desire to embarrass the Government in the conduct of these difficult negotiations. We should have been prepared to give our hearty support to the Government in any measures short of such as would have involved this country in war. As regards isolated action I read with pleasure what the noble Marquess said at the Guildhall, that—without in the least indicating that he was prepared for isolated action—he was not one of those who put aside isolated action as impossible in certain circumstances. I do not think it is in any way desirable that the position should be laid down as regards such a country as this that we are precluded from isolated action where circumstances render such isolated action desirable and not dangerous to the peace of the world. But I agree that isolated action which would have plunged Europe into war would never be justified, and ought never to be undertaken. I now pass to another subject. The next most important paragraph in the Queen's Speech to those paragraphs to which I have referred is that which tells us what has taken place in Dongola, and here I cannot possibly refrain from expressing my admiration of the manner in which that expedition was conducted, and the feeling, which I know is universal, that the greatest honour is due to the gallant officer who commanded the troops, and to the Egyptian troops themselves, who upon this occasion seemed to have proved that they have profited by the discipline to which they have been subject, and are troops who can be depended upon to do their duty in whatever circumstances they are placed. So far as the success of the expedition is concerned, I think there is no one in this country who does not, as a military event, regard it with complete satisfaction. But when I come to the policy which has induced the Government to go forward in this direction I confess I part company with them. What we have never known—and what, I think, the country has a right to know—clearly is what is the policy of the Government as regards the Soudan. I cannot see what has been gained by the mystery in which that policy has been involved, not only in this country, but elsewhere in Europe. That mysterious policy has been viewed with surprise, and—as is natural—with suspicion. I think we gain nothing by increasing that suspicion, nor do I believe anything is gained by our not having a full disclosure of the policy in view. We have had various statements. Lord Cromer, who must have been well informed of the intentions of the Government, made a speech at a banquet given to Sir H. Kitchener, in which he said, "Gentlemen, the primary object of the campaign has been accomplished." What was that primary object? That object, according to Lord Cromer, was to remove the pressure upon the army of a nation which is connected by very close bonds of sympathy and friendship with England and Egypt. I am extremely glad that any opportunity should have occurred of relieving the pressure upon our friendly and cordial allies, the Italians. But that could not have been, I should have thought, the primary object, because we have heard from other sources that the object was to retrieve the honour of this country by reconquering the Soudan. If the honour of this country is involved in the reconquest of the Soudan, I would ask the noble Marquess how it came about that the honour of this country was not infringed by the conclusion of the well-known Drummond-Wolff Convention, which provided for the evacuation of Egypt without any condition that previously to that convention the Soudan should have been reconquered. If it is dishonourable now not to reconquer the Soudan, it must have been so then. I do not, therefore, see precisely upon what grounds that rests. ["Hear, hear!"] The Speech certainly throws some new light on the policy of the Government, because it says that the way has been opened for a further advance whenever such a step shall be judged desirable. What must be the meaning of that sentence? It must mean that the advance is to go steadily on as circumstances render it expedient to move until the Soudan has been recovered. If it does not mean that, I do not know what it means. Let me ask what that involves. In the first place, I assume that it is in the power of this country to reconquer the Soudan. But, I would ask, at whose expense is that to be done? We have seen that the expense does not fall upon the Egyptian funds, because, unfortunately, the Powers who have a certain control in Egyptian affairs objected to those funds being called upon to bear the expense for the purposes of the Egyptian expedition, and we have been obliged to recoup the Egyptian Government for that which they had, according to the decision of the tribunal, unjustly taken. I do not conceive that anyone imagines that the reconquest of the Soudan can be accomplished with Egyptian funds, and the cost, therefore, I suppose, would fall upon this country. But look what would take place if the Soudan were reconquered. You could not retire from that territory until you had firmly established the Egyptians there. To imagine that that would not take a considerable time —probably many years—seems to me entirely mistaken. To abandon the Egyptians in the Soudan, after placing them there, before they were firmly established seems to me a most unfavourable proposition as regards Egypt. We should probably have to remain in the Soudan many years, and English officers would have to control the Egyptians there for a considerable time. I am not a Little Englander, but I have this feeling—that this country does ill when it establishes itself on great continents far away from its naval base, and in countries which can only be held by large armed forces. That I believe to be contrary to the true policy of this country; and, therefore, it is my view that if the reconquest of the Soudan were accomplished, not only should we in no way have strengthened this country, but weakened it to a considerable extent. For that reason I view with alarm the indication, as I take it, that the reconquest of the Soudan is actually and really aimed at. I know these are, to a certain extent, assumptions on my part, and I should be glad to hear what precisely is the policy Her Majesty's Government intends to pursue towards the Soudan. ["Hear, hear!"] We next have a reference to a very sad calamity indeed which has befallen India. A famine has broken out, perhaps more extended than almost any famine there has been for a long period of years, coupled with a visitation of a plague which is of a most alarming kind when joined with destitution, and consequent disease in large bodies of the population. I feel the deepest sympathy with the calamity that has befallen India, but I have confidence that the Government of India, as far as human means and skill will avail, will deal promptly and efficiently with the calamity. ["Hear, hear!"] They have vast experience as regards the management of measures for the relief of famine. They have a very efficient staff, and I think the people of this country may rest assured that the skill, energy, and self-devotion which characterises the Indian servants, under the guidance of my noble Friend, Lord Elgin, will spare no effort to alleviate the suffering. [" Hear, hear ! "] There is a reference also in the Speech to the rebellion in Matabeleland. South Africa is a very tempting theme, but I will not trouble your Lordships by a long series of observations on that question. What I will say is that I sincerely trust that, in the most important Inquiry which is about to take place in the other House, not only will the circumstances of the deplorable raid be thoroughly investigated, but also the whole system of government of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, in order to see whether it is now placed on a satisfactory basis, and if that basis be not found satisfactory to devise how it can be made better. More than that I do not desire to say, except that I have an earnest hope, notwithstanding all the calamitous results of that most unfortunate raid, that by patience and good management in this country and at the Cape, the wounds may gradually be healed, and you may in time achieve that which is essential to the prosperity of South Africa —namely, the establishment of a thorough good sentiment between both Dutch and British in these colonies, with, ultimately, such a fusion between them as may insure the permanent good of a country which has made so wonderful a development lately, and which, I am satisfied, has before it a great future. [" Hear, hear ! "] These are the principal topics to which I need refer, and I come to other matters which are not quite so exciting. I am extremely edified by what is, I think, quite a new characteristic of the Speech—namely, the extreme caution with which the measures are introduced. [*Laughter.*] The singular thing is that so impressed were Her Majesty's Government with the danger that their measures may never be brought before Parliament, that they have not been satisfied with saying it once, but twice over they have said that

"further legislative proposals will be brought before you if the time at your disposal suffices for the purpose."

Then, after all, the measures are enumerated, and we are told that they will be considered if opportunity should be found to lay them before you. I can quite understand what the feeling of Her Majesty's Government must be by the experience of last Session. They then had announced a very large number of measures, and owing to the very unfortunate fate of their principal measure—that upon education—they never, in fact, arrived at the point when these measures could be considered. Warned by that, they have put in this caution. I hope it is not an indication that the education measure of the present Session will block their way, though if it at all resemble the measure of last Session nothing would give me greater pleasure than that it should receive the same fate. [" Hear, hear ! "] I am willing to hope for better things, and I am sure if the measure of education is of a simple character and directed really, not to the upsetting of the whole of our present system, but to rendering thoroughly efficient the voluntary schools, then I think it will receive very general support, and, we hope, may pass through Parliament in time to enable some of the other measures mentioned to be considered. [" Hear, hear ! "] There are one or two measures of some little interest, one of which relates to the amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act of Great Britain. I confess, until the speech of the Seconder of the Address, I was not nearly sagacious enough to discover that underneath that lies the carrying into effect of some portions of the recommendations of the Commission on the Welsh land. That, doubtless, renders it an interesting proposal. The noble Lord, who served upon the Commission, has told us, more or less, how far he is inclined to go. It appears that there are a good many of his compatriots in Wales who are inclined to go rather farther than he. When we see the measure and know precisely what it does, we shall be able to judge whether it is likely to satisfy the very extended desires which manifested themselves in Wales for a reform of the land system, and I shall abstain from any comment upon the matter until I know what is proposed. Then you are told that, in the interests of agriculture, which are of paramount importance in Ireland, you will be asked to consider a Bill for the establishment of a Board of Agriculture in that country. I confess that paragraph almost took my breath away. The importance of it is so great that, looking at the various subjects now occupying attention in Ireland, I rather wondered whether it was to be regarded as the solution of certain questions which are not usually brought before this House—questions with regard to the financial arrangements in Ireland, which seem to be much more likely to occupy the attention than the constitution of this Agricultural Board. ["Hear, hear!"] I shall be uncommonly surprised if the constitution of this Board removes any portion, even the smallest, of the very serious difficulties which have arisen in connection with the question to which I have alluded, and which I have no doubt we shall hear much more of, though perhaps not so much in this House. It has already produced results in Ireland of the most surprising kind, and amongst others has enabled us to say, upon authority which cannot possibly be denied, the authority of Mr. Daly, that we have amongst us an Irish Washington. [*Laughter.*] These, I believe, are all the measures to which I need allude. I must apologise to the House for the length at which I have addressed them. The subjects are of considerable importance. I have said what I thought it necessary to say upon this occasion, and I hope the noble Marquess will not think in the observations I have made on foreign policy, although I have criticised some particular points, that I have done so with the slightest intention of embarrassing his conduct of a Department which my experience tells me is beset with difficulties, and the successful conduct of which is not of interest to one Party, but to all, the object being that friendly relations with other Powers should be preserved and the honour of this country firmly upheld. [*Cheers.*]

*THE PRIME MINISTER, who was received with loud cheers, said: My first and most agreeable duty is to congratulate the noble Earl on his reappearance as the Leader of the Party to which he belongs. We had so much experience before of the admirable manner in which he performed his duties and of the fidelity with which he observed the traditions and practices of this House, and I am bound to say also of his consideration to his opponents, that it is with considerable satisfaction that I see him take up the reins again. But I must not omit to express, as he did, a great and deep regret for the retirement for the moment from among us of the Earl of Rosebery from a position of authority. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord is a man exceedingly popular in private life, and, I think, not less popular in public life, and the ability with which he conducted a position of exceeding difficulty I think won the sympathy of all. [*Cheers.*] Perhaps I may say that he is happy in the opportunity of his retirement, because he was enabled to mark upon an interesting period of his country's history not only the proof of his own purity of motive, but the high standard by which he judged the duty of public men in foreign affairs. He made a most patriotic and, I may say, a most useful and beneficial speech. I should be inclined to add that I do not see why that speech should involve his retirement from the leadership of his Party. ["Hear, hear!"] But if I pursued that subject I should be meddling with affairs which do not concern me, and so I must not pursue that train of thought. I agree with very many things which the noble Earl has said, and, I need not say, among the first with the congratulations which he offered to Her Majesty for the remarkable and unique period to which her reign has run and for the marvellous effect which the success of that reign and the contemplation of her character have produced, not only upon the affections of her own people, but upon the respect of the whole civilised world. [*Cheers.*] And those who, like the noble Lord, have had the opportunity of watching the working of that character more nearly can testify to the effects and benignant influence which it has always worked on the conduct of constitutional policy, and can bear witness to the extent to which the peculiar characteristics displayed by the Queen have enabled constitutional government to attain to a success to which it has never attained in any other part of the world. [*Cheers.*] I must also tender my hearty congratulations to the noble Friends behind me for the speeches which they have delivered. The late Lord Bath was for a great number of years a friend of mine, and I admired him in the instances —unfortunately few—in which he showed his powers and his knowledge of public business in this House. I am very pleased to feel, from the specimen which we have heard to-night, that his son will succeed to all his powers, and I hope he will give us more constant assistance in the conduct of the business that may come before us. The speeches we heard both from the Mover and the Seconder —I speak, I am afraid, now from a very considerable experience—stand on a very high level in the list of those to which in succeeding years we have listened on similar occasions. I ought not to pass by a sadder strain in the speech of the noble Earl, by which he wished to record his deep regret for the loss which not only the English Church, but the English nation, has sustained by the death of Archbishop Benson. ["Hear, hear!"] He was a man very singularly gifted for the position he occupied. He was not remarkable for many of the qualities which often distinguish those of his profession. I do not think that men will put him high as an eloquent preacher or speaker, but he was singularly powerful in the government of men. He was a peacemaker and brought men together, and he led the Church in a most difficult period, without sacrificing any of the veneration he enjoyed, or any of those principles which he held, for the benefit of the nation at large. ["Hear, hear!"] Now I come to the substance of the noble Lord's speech. Of course, as we know, every road leads to Rome, and every debate ends in Armenia. [*Laughter.*] On Armenia I must say a word. It appeared to me that the criticisms of the noble Lord amounted to Hansardising the speeches delivered by me in the year 1878. I do not believe that any person who is the most enamoured of his own eloquence could ever remember what he said 20 years ago. ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Earl ought, I think, kindly to have given me notice, so that I might have refreshed my memory. But I am afraid I must hand my consistency over to him, for, whilst I may have said what he attributes to me, or may have said something in addition which qualifies its meaning, I am now powerless to contest the point. But I do demur very much to the tone adopted by the noble Lord and those who think with him with reference to Lord Beaconsfield's policy in 1878. They seem to think that Lord Beaconsfield invented it, that with a light heart he took up the difficult cause which he felt bound to advocate, and that the policy was purely selected by himself. But the policy was not selected by himself; it was inherited from others, and those others were the very opponents who were denouncing him. The noble Lord says that our difficulties with Russia are increased by the recollection of the Treaty of Berlin. Does he imagine that they are not increased by the recollection of the Crimean war? ["Hear, hear!"] There is no doubt that Lord Beaconsfield adopted a policy which is exposed in this to criticism, that the hopes he entertained were not fulfilled, and that the difficulties which he had to meet have recurred to us. But it was not his policy from the first—he was not the author of it—which bound up our hopes and expectations in the regeneration of the Turkish Empire. Others in Europe felt the scepticism which is tolerably general now, and doubted the expediency of making the success of Ottoman institutions the cardinal principle in our policy and aims. Among those was the Emperor Nicholas I. He made proposals which, I imagine, if they were made now would be gladly accepted. He made proposals in 1851. Were they refused by the benighted Tories?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: It was later than 1851.

*THE PRIME MINISTER: I think the conversation with Sir H. Seymour took place in 1851.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: It took place in the beginning of 1853.

*THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, Lord Palmerston was in that Government, but it was Lord Clarendon, of whom the noble Lord was the subordinate, who adopted that policy. I do not venture to censure the decision to which Lord Clarendon came when he refused to accept the proposal of the Emperor Nicholas for dividing the influence which the Great Powers should exercise on the Turkish Empire. It was very startling, it ran against many current feelings and prepossessions, and was exposed to great danger. I am not surprised at—I do not venture to censure—the choice to which Lord Clarendon and his colleagues came; but I am bound to say that if you call upon me to look back and to interpret the present by the past, to lay on this shoulder or on that the responsibility for the difficulties in which we find ourselves now, the parting of the ways was in 1853, when the Emperor Nicholas's proposals were rejected. Many Members of this House will keenly feel the nature of the mistake that was made when I say that we put all our money upon the wrong horse. [*Laughter.*] It may be in the experience of those who have done the same thing that it is not very easy to withdraw from a step of that kind when it has once been taken—[*laughter*]—and that you are practically obliged to go on. All that Lord Beaconsfield did was to carry out the policy which his predecessors had laid down. I was acquainted with Lord Beaconsfield's thoughts at that time; he was not free from misgiving, but he felt that unity of policy in this great country was something so essential, and that the danger of shifting from one policy to another without perfectly seeing all the results to which you would come, was so paramount that he always said that the policy of Lord Palmerston must be upheld. He still entertained hopes which I did not entertain in quite the same degree. But those hopes have not been justified. I shall not describe the present condition of the Turkish Empire; it would not be decorous; besides, the noble Earl has done it for me. But that we are placed in a position of exceeding difficulty in consequence of those historic events is a matter that cannot be disputed, and the difficulty lies in this—neither our own feelings, nor the feelings of those we represent, nor the enlightened conscience of the day in which we live will allow us to look with absolute indifference to what is going on. And yet how small our power of modifying the results of those events must be! When I succeeded to office the point on which I was disposed to criticise the noble Lord's policy was that I thought he had not made it sufficiently clear to himself whether the other Powers, especially Russia, were prepared to support him, or how far they were prepared to go. We indulged occasionally in hopes, prompted by language we heard, but the issue, as everyone knows, was that Russia was not prepared to go on. The statement was made categorically, and from that moment, I think, our individual and isolated responsibility disappeared. We became again simply signatories to the Treaty of Paris. The noble Lord is very angry with the Treaty of Paris, and wishes to substitute for it the Treaty of Berlin. But he will not improve his position. The Treaty of Berlin directly confirms and re-enacts all that is contained in the Treaty of Paris; so it mattered little which he referred to. We are still signatories of that Treaty. I do not see we can take any other course except to exert what influence we may possess with the other Powers of Europe to induce them to press on the Sultan such reforms as may be necessary not only to save his subjects from massacre, but to preserve his own empire from a ruin which, if he does not take the requisite precautions in time, cannot be long delayed. ["Hear, hear!"] We have done that. We have urged our views on the other Powers. They do not as a rule disagree with us; none of them disagree with us, I think, in their horror of what has taken place. It is, I think, natural they should be more deeply impressed than we are with the terrible alternative of European war which any error or mistake in the application of pressure on the Sultan might possibly bring about. The noble Lord will see, when he reads the papers which I have laid on the Table to-night, that the Powers are agreed as to the necessity of taking these matters into consideration, and doing their utmost to find out the remedies by which the Sultan's empire might be saved. They, I think, are generally agreed that it is possible at all events that if he refuses, material pressure will have to be applied by the rest of Europe; but there are slight differences in the wording in which those views are expressed, which will appear at once to noble Lords when they read the dispatches, far more clearly than I could venture to safely indicate at this table, and the precise extent to which the various Powers have contemplated the possibility of having to apply the material pressure in order to enforce reforms on the Turkish Empire. My own conviction is strong that, unless some very essential reforms in the conduct of the government are adopted, the doom of the Turkish Empire cannot be very long postponed. [*Cheers.*] I think that many, and some of the most important, of the other Powers do not differ materially from us in that respect. But if I said that they had pledged themselves to use force it might be thought that I had used a slightly too strong expression. The pledge is, of course, a matter of exceeding importance, and they have used care and circumspection in the language which they have employed. But they are all convinced that, unless the Powers can agree and the Sultan can agree with us as to introducing genuine and effective reforms in the extravagant autocracy which prevails in Turkey at this moment, the worst results must follow. ["Hear, hear!"] I shall not attempt to justify the conduct of Her Majesty's Government, among other reasons, for this. Directly you form part of a concert with other Powers and lose no doubt a part of your responsibility, you lose also the right of frankly defending yourself. You cannot state all you have done, the impediments you may have met; you cannot examine in public, as we are accustomed to do, your own conduct before the world. We can only say that in taking this attitude, not very common for English Governments, we have pursued a course which we believe was the best for restoring the Turkish Empire and which we certainly think is far the most expedient, in order to obtain that object of paramount importance—the preservation of the peace of Europe. [*Cheers.*] I will now say a word about a matter where we are decidedly acting with—if I may so express myself—abundant isolation; I mean the Egyptian campaign. [*Laughter.*] But there again I have a difficulty. The noble Lord is very inquisitive. He wants to know a great many things. He wants to know what we are going to do, why we are going to do it, how we intend to overcome this difficulty and that difficulty. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to expound the whole of our policy in the minutest details to the noble Lord if I could have the noble Lord alone. [*Laughter.*) But I am afraid other people will overhear what I am saying to the noble Lord; and there is one person who will overhear, and he is the last person I desire to inform on the subject—the Khalifa of Omdurman. ["Hear, hear!"] His sources of intelligence are very great, and if I explained all our military intentions with the frankness which the noble Lord asks, I am not sure but he would draw some advantage from that indiscretion on our part. I hope, however, that the ultimate result will show that he judged us too harshly. Of course, there are financial questions which will be duly exposed to the other House. I do not remember the figures well enough to enter upon them now, but they are matters on which the House of Commons will no doubt require full information. But as to our general plan I venture to repeat what I said last summer—that one of the objects for which we occupy Dongola was because it was on the highway to Khartoum—[*cheers*]—and that we do look upon the occupation of Khartoum sooner or later as the objective to which we are urged alike by our desire to efface something of what took place ten years ago, and also by our desire to extirpate from the earth one of the vilest and cruellest despotisms which has ever been seen, something compared to which the worst performances of the worst minion of the palace at Constantinople are bright and saintly deeds, and because we desire to pour into the lap of Egypt those countless treasures of industry and commerce which the fertile valley of the Nile is prepared to carry down as of old, if we only remove the cruel hand which has hitherto stifled the industry of the Egyptian and the Soudanese people. [*Cheers.*] I am very unfortunate in every desire I have had to speak with the utmost frankness to the noble Lord. I have always found one figure in my path. I cannot tell him all about Armenia, owing to the concert of Europe; I cannot speak freely of the military operations that may happen in the next five years in the Soudan on account of the Khalifa; and I cannot speak quite freely about the Arbitration Treaty because it is not yet ratified. But I do not think on that matter I need expend much effort in convincing the noble Lord. He probably agrees with me as heartily as anyone else as to the advantages which such a treaty will confer if it could be ratified, and I am merely taking up a thread which had broken in the hand of a Secretary of State two years ago. I will make one observation of a general kind. You must not think that we are the victim of millennial anticipations if we hope that something may be done by an Arbitration Treaty to diminish the risk of war. I do not say that it will remove the greatest risks of war. I do not say that it would restrain a Napoleon or a Bismarck; but diplomacy is full of an indefinite number of small differences which are caught up by the people and the Press of both countries and which, written about, exaggerated, and enlarged upon, tend to diminish the friendship which exists between them, and even to give birth to a feeling of alienation and resentment. The power of immediately going to a tribunal to settle these things would prevent a process so injurious to the good will of nations, and especially between two nations who understand each other unfortunately so well that if we are not friends it is almost inevitable we should be enemies. But there is still a further reason and advantage in the existence of the arbitration system; and this arises from the prevalence of popular institutions in most of the countries of the world. In most countries of the world there are Ministers who govern, and there are Members of Parliament and others who criticise them. Those Members of Parliament are of various shades of thought, but their body generally contains one especial section of whom I speak with all respect, though I must give them a familiar name—they are known as Jingoes in popular estimation. They are very patriotic men and the warmth of their patriotism sometimes clouds their appreciation of details; but they exist in all countries. [*Laughter.*] You will always find when you are discussing a matter with a Minister that one of the principal subjects which preoccupies him is how he is to furnish an account of the matter which shall be sufficiently soothing to this very excitable portion of his critics. [*Laughter.*] Now, my belief is that a well working arbitration system would be an invaluable bulwark to defend the Minister from the Jingoes. [*Laughter.*] It would be impossible for them to accuse him of having trifled with the honour of the country, or with surrendering substantial advantages, if he could say:—"Well, I submitted the matter to an impartial tribunal as provided by treaty, and unfortunately the decision went against us." It is impossible not to feel that a Minister, even of the most sturdy and patriotic character, would negotiate with a freer hand and with more determination if he were absolutely secured from danger of interference of this kind. But I am not saying this with any reference to our own country; because I think that in this country less than in others Ministers' hands are forced by criticisms of this sort. But take a larger view. What would you say is the great change which has passed over Europe since the older of us were young men? It is this tremendous increase in the burdens which the necessity of self-defence has cast upon every nation of the world. That burden goes on getting higher and higher; a larger and larger part of the population is devoted to military service; more and more money has to be spent in the provision of the mechanical apparatus of war; and, as the conquests of science are extended, not only are all previous efforts determined to be obsolete and have to be thrown away and something new introduced in their place, but a larger and larger proportion of the public wealth has to be devoted to this unremunerative purpose. The burden has become so serious to many nations that many have thought that the day will come when nations will rather rush into war and provoke a decision once for all than continue to groan under the sufferings which modern necessity forces upon them. I do not say that arbitration would put an end to this; but while the evil is growing surely it is our duty to make an effort, as time and opportunity offer, to provide some system which shall be in some degree a substitute for this ruinous necessity, and so apply to public war that remedy which was applied by the same means to private war many centuries ago. I believe that the measure we have taken will be principally valuable in this—that it will lead to other measures of the same kind, and that we—those of us who live—shall have the advantage of seeing the necessity for these vast armaments gradually disappear before the growth of that which we have begun, within the bounds of our own nation, to regard as a necessity of civilised life—the substitution of judicial decisions for the coarse arbitrament of force. [*Cheers.*] This, my Lords, if we achieve it, will be an achievement on which it will be pleasant to look back. I hope that this effort, small as it is, will be successful, and that others will have the privilege of carrying it out still further and of making its efficacy still greater. [*Cheers.*]

Lord CASTLETOWN said that no mention was made in the Queen's Speech of the finding of the Commission on Financial Relations. But as he understood that that omission was a matter of Parliamentary procedure, he and his Friends should not raise the question at present. The matter was of the greatest importance to people in Ireland, and, indeed, to both countries; and, therefore, he and his Friends had decided that it would be wise to put down a notice on the Paper and bring it forward for discussion at an early and convenient date.

Lord MONTEAGLE desired to call attention to the Irish measures which were to be brought forward. He regretted that the only Bill to which allusion was made besides the Board of Agriculture Bill was ranked among those which were to be dealt with if time permitted One of the most pressing of Irish questions—the provision of University education for Catholics—was not even mentioned, though the grievance had been admitted for more than 20 years. As an Irish Liberal Unionist, he thought it most important that such a question should be dealt with by a Unionist Government. As to the measure for constituting a Board of Agriculture in Ireland, much disappointment had been caused in Ireland by the employment of the word "Board," which had in Ireland a special significance. It meant a Dublin Castle bureau, and was accordingly regarded with great suspicion by the great mass of the population. He wished to urge on Her Majesty's Government that the old lines should not be followed in the appointment of this Board; that it should not be made subservient to Dublin Castle; that it should be framed to command the confidence of the great bulk of the agricultural population, and to attract the popular imagination some representative element should be introduced. He hoped the Government would approach the question in a broad and liberal spirit.

Motion agreed to, *nemine dissentiente,* and ordered to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Earl of Morley appointed, *nemine dissentiente,* to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session.

COMMITTEE FOR PRIVILEGES.

Appointed.

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE JOURNALS.

Appointed.

STOPPAGES IN THE STREETS.

Order to prevent, renewed.

APPEAL COMMITTEE.

Appointed.

INDIA (SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCE).

Copy of Correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury regarding the superannuation allowance of Major-General Sir Owen Tudor Burne, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.: Address for *(The Earl of Onslow).*

House adjourned at Half-past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 19th January 1897.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners by Black Rod.

The House went, and, having returned,

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had issued during the Recess Warrants for New Writs for,—

Borough of Bradford (East Division) *v.* Henry Byron Reed, esquire, deceased.

County of York, North Riding (Cleveland Division) *v.* Henry Fell Pease, esquire, deceased.

NEW WRITS.

For the City of Salisbury, *v.* Edward Henry Hulse, esquire, Manor of Northstead.—*(Sir William Walrond.)*

County of Forfar, *v.* James Martin White, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds,—*(Mr. Thomas Ellis.)*

ELECTIONS.

Ordered,—That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the Return for that place; and if anything shall come in question touching the Return or Election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double Returns do withdraw till their Returns are determined.

Resolved,—That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the Election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.), moved:—

"That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the Election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament."

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet), rising amid the cheers of the Irish Members, said he desired to ask the Government whether they were of opinion that any good object was served—[*cheers*]—by the retention upon the Order Book of the House of a Resolution which it was notorious must be evaded, which the House had no means of enforcing, and which he thought scarcely redounded to the credit or the dignity of the House. He questioned whether the House would do right to again assent to this Motion and expressed his readiness to take the sense of the House in regard to it. [*Cheers.*] He objected to the House passing any resolution at all with regard to the alleged interference of peers in elections.

The House divided:—Ayes, 334; Noes, 68.—(Division List, No. 1.)

Resolved,—That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by Bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such Bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved,—That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any Witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime and misdemeanour; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved,—That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered,—That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Serjeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered,—That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered,—That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

For the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries, read the first time; to be read a second time.

JOURNAL.

Ordered,—That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last Session to the end of the present Session, with an Index thereto, be printed.

Ordered,—That 750 copies of the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Sir Reginald Francis Douce Palgrave, K.C.B., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered,—That the said Journal and Index be printed by such Person as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other Person do presume to print the same.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Captain Ronald Henry Fulke Greville, commonly called the Hon. Ronald Henry Fulke Greville, for Borough of Bradford, (East Division).

COAL TABLES.

Copy ordered of Statement showing the production and consumption of Coal, and the number of persons employed in Coal production, in the principal countries of the world, in each year from 1883 to 1895, as far as the particulars can be stated.—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 1.]

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1895-6.

Copy ordered.

"of Accounts showing,—
- (1.) The Receipts and Payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1896;
- (2.) The Distribution of the Capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year;

together with the Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 1.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Copy ordered,

"of Account of the Receipts and Payments of the Accountant-General of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland, in respect of the Funds of Suitors in the said Court, in the year to the 30th day of September, 1896, together with a Statement of Liabilities and Assets and particulars of Securities in Court, on the 30th day of September, 1896."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 3.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (BALLOT FOR BILLS AND NOTICES OF MOTIONS).

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) gave notice that to-morrow he would move—

"That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the Ballot, and that all Members who desire to Ballot, whether for Bills or Motions for the first four Tuesdays of the Session, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the Session, and that a Copy of such Notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on the third day of the Session:

"That the Ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day of the Session at a convenient time and place to be appointed by Mr. Speaker:

"That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House."

GOVERNMENT BILLS.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, amid Ministerial cheers, said: I beg to give notice that on Thursday next I will move for leave to bring in a Bill for aiding voluntary schools. (*Cheers.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to give notice that on an early day I will move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the law of compensation to workmen for injuries sustained in the exercise of their employment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I beg to give notice that on Thursday I will ask for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the law of evidence in criminal cases.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I beg to give notice that on Thursday next I will ask for leave to bring in a Bill to provide for the expenses of certain military works and other military services. [*Cheers.*]

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I beg to give notice that on Thursday I will move for leave to bring in a Bill for the establishment of a Board of Agriculture in Ireland and for other purposes. [*Cheers.*]

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I beg to give notice that on Thursday I will move for leave to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the public health in Scotland. ["Hear, hear!"]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[FIRST DAY.]

MR. SPEAKER reported Her Majesty's Speech, and read it to the House.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE (Wilton, Wilts), who wore the uniform of a major of the 1st Wilts Rifle Volunteers, rose to move an Address in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne. He said he desired at once to ask the kind indulgence of the House while he fulfilled the difficult task which had been placed in his hands, and he did so with the utmost sincerity and with the greater hope that the House would grant it since he had never yet intervened in its debates during the time he had had the honour of being a member of the House. The assurances which Her Majesty's Gracious Speech gave them as regarded foreign affairs were such as would, he felt sure, commend themselves to the House. They were, in every instance almost, satisfactory. There was, perhaps, one instance in which the epithet satisfactory could only be used in qualified terms, for while he thought the great majority of the people of this country were satisfied that Her Majesty's Government had adopted a wise and prudent policy with regard to the abominable massacres in Turkey, no one could look even on the present state of affairs in that unfortunate country with satisfaction. [*Cheers.*] It was his hope, as it was the expressed hope of every one, that the Powers might find means in a very short time to deal effectively with the questions which were troubling that country, and might be able to place before the Sultan such reforms as would secure to the people of his dominions, both Christian and Mahomedan, thorough peace and thorough security. [*Cheers.*] He felt sure the House would agree that the campaign which had recently been brought to a successful issue in the Soudan reflected the very greatest credit, not only upon the troops, but upon the officers of the force which undertook that campaign. [*Cheers.*] He thought it might be looked upon with the greatest gratification by the Khedive, who, with the advice of Her Majesty's Government, undertook the campaign, and with legitimate pride on their own parts since they knew that the efficiency of the force was largely, if not entirely, owing to the work done by British officers. [*Cheers.*] He was heartily glad to see in the Speech the reference to a further advance which might possibly occur in the future. [*Cheers*] Hon. Members would have noticed the report which General Kitchener had recently brought back from the province of Dongola, and which proved what a great blessing the occupation of the province had already become to the people living there. It showed also that there was a prospect of doing the very greatest amount of good in the country, and of bringing to the population there increased comfort and prosperity. He hoped, therefore, it might not be long before they saw the Egyptian troops carrying the advance further into the Soudan to recover those provinces which Egypt had lost in past times. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought they would be doing their duty in supporting that movement, because in that way they would be putting an end to perhaps one of the most barbarous tyrannies that any country had ever suffered under, and restoring to those fertile provinces the great blessings of peace and civilisation. [*Cheers.*] The whole country, he was sure, would congratulate Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States on the very felicitous ending to their negotiations in reference to Venezuela. [*Cheers.*] It was not only of the utmost satisfaction to everyone that the question of boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana should be settled by arbitration, though that in itself was a most important matter, but he ventured to think that this country and the people of the world would have reason in the future to be proud of the steps which had been taken in the direction of international peace by this Treaty of Arbitration between themselves and the United States. [*Cheers.*] It was the fervent hope of everyone that the American Legislature would see fit to ratify the Treaty, and when they had done so he thought it possible that they might look forward to the time when other countries and nations would follow the example and give up altogether the bloody arbitrament of war in favour of universal peace, which would enable the peoples of the world to extend their civilisation and to improve their prospects for the comfort and well-being of all humanity. [*Cheers.*] In common with everyone else, he was heartily glad that the rebellion in Matabeleland and Mashonaland had come to an end. It was, of course, only a question of time as to when the rebellion would be put down, and the only thing they had to regret was that many noble lives which could ill be spared had been lost in its suppression. ["Hear, hear!"] Everybody must have heard with the deepest regret of the awful calamity which had fallen upon India, and, while at present, perhaps, he was hardly in a position to estimate the full intensity of the disaster, he felt convinced that Her Majesty's Government, both in this country and in India, would make every endeavour and take every possible step to mitigate the sufferings the poor people in India must endure. ["Hear, hear!"] Turning to the legislative measures mentioned in the Queen's Speech, he rejoiced greatly that in the forefront of the programme appeared the question of the Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] Both sides of the House must share the feeling that it was necessary that something should be done to maintain these schools in their position—["hear"]—and he hoped that the controversies which had taken place would allow the completion within a short period of time of the work to which the Government had set their

Viscount Folkestone.

hands. He held it to be absolutely necessary that something should be done to save those schools from extinction, and in the action they were taking Her Majesty's Government were only fulfilling pledges which many Members on that side of the House gave to their supporters at the last General Election. ["Hear, hear!"] There would be agreement, no doubt, on both sides of the House as to the necessity for a measure which would protect the workman from the results of accident in his employment, and he had confidence the Government would deal with the subject of Employers' Liability in a spirit fair to employers and employed, yet not interfering with the freedom of workpeople. The first duty of a Government was to provide adequately for the defence of the country —["hear, hear"]—and, inasmuch as the Government had devoted a large portion of last Session to the needs of the Navy, it was only right now to turn to the Army and complete our defensive system. Whatever might be the future of this country, and though he might hope that treaties of arbitration might avert the probabilities of war, it was nevertheless under present circumstances absolutely necessary that we should make ourselves strong in a position of defence, so that our commerce should proceed unimpeded and our resources should not fail. As Member for an agricultural constituency he recognised the advantages of the institution of a Board of Agriculture. In extending such an institution to Ireland the Government were acting in a wise and statesmanlike manner, and he felt sure that Irish agriculturists would benefit by this action. Fully he acknowledged the great benefit which the Government had given to agriculture in this country by the work of last Session. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh, but he ventured to think that one who spent most of his time among agricultural people had better opportunity of forming a judgment on the subject than those whose experience and interest were chiefly concerned with towns. ["Hear!"] He fully recognised the magnanimous spirit of the Government towards agriculture, and, at the risk of being thought presumptious, he hoped that time and the general disposition of the House would allow of the measures indicated in the latter part of the Queen's Speech being proceeded with. There was much in the Speech that would give general satisfaction, including the statement as to the present state of foreign affairs and the modesty of the programme of measures to be proceeded with. He was extremely proud of being intrusted with the duty of moving the Address in reply to the Speech at this period so near the completion of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign. ["Hear, hear!"] He moved that Address with the most sincere feelings of loyal affection towards Her Majesty, fully sensible as he was that the feelings of the people of this country and of Her Majesty's subjects all over the world were of the deepest reverence and loyalty. [*Cheers.*] It was his ardent wish that Her Majesty might long be spared to reign over her great Empire wisely and justly as in the past. [*Cheers.*] He formally moved the Address in reply to the Speech.

*MR. ALFRED LYTTELTON (Warwick and Leamington), who was attired in Court dress, seconded the motion. It was difficult, he said, at such a moment not to think of the great changes which had passed over the country during the long and illustrious reign of Her Majesty, and by contrast the present legislative proposals might appear unheroic when the great changes of this long reign were remembered. This was, however, but a superficial view. The reign had seen the establishment of the power of democracy, and naturally enough the problems of to-day differed widely from the problems which confronted the Statesmen of the past. At the present time there was no great fear of privilege, and no Briton had any substantial fear of the action of an imperious nobility or the influence of a tyrannous Church. Few would deny the importance of the group of subjects the Government proposed to deal with. It would be generally agreed that it was important to improve our system of national education without impairing religious individuality, to maintain our industrial greatness, and yet continue to improve the lot of the craftsman, and consolidate national strength and yet increase respect for the rights of other countries. The Government struck at the heart of such problems by Bills to maintain Voluntary Schools, regulating Employers' Liability, and increasing National Armaments, and at the same time concluding a Treaty of Arbitration with America. Upon this and other subjects mentioned he was sanguine enough to hope that the discussions would be in the spirit of those mentioned by Carlyle as having taken place between himself and Sterling—"Except in opinion not disagreeing." [*Laughter.*] The discussions of last year on the Bill, conducted with so much ability by the Vice-President of the Council, seemed to him to win some questions affecting Education and Reform from the region of controversy. He did not think after the discussions that had taken place that anyone would say that Voluntary Schools should not be subsidised. Nor would anyone deny that the process euphemistically termed the painless extinction of the Voluntary Schools was really the painful extinction of the efficient education of several generations of children, for it was obvious that if they allowed their schools to be extinguished in this way, the children who attended them must during that time be lamentably impaired in their education. The immense difficulty and complexity of the subject should persuade reasonable men that even with the best Government legitimate grievances might be left. But at least they might expect and might hope that the debates upon the subject might not provoke the satire which Bishop Warburton was heard to mutter after hearing a debate on the Test Acts:—

> "It seems to me orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy is another man's doxy."

With regard to the Employers' Liability question it was well known that the Bill of 1880 modified the doctrine of common employment and increased the responsibilities of employers, but the result had been to suggest many questions of very great difficulty for the Courts. There had been an immense increase of litigation on this subject, and a measure which in point of fact was designed to compensate meritorious and suffering workmen has been a source of great benefit to a class, meritorious indeed, and alleged to be suffering—he meant the members of the legal profession. For himself he remembered the way in which the historian Gibbon when in a dilemma caused by conflict between the tenderest passion and the most elementary duty solved the problem—he sighed like a lover, but obeyed like a son. If the Government succeeded in passing a measure diminishing litigation he should sigh as a lawyer, but would rejoice as a citizen. He wished to say a single word upon the important subject of the Treaty of Arbitration. He was not one of those who supposed that the Treaty for a moment indicated that Englishmen respected their country less than they did formerly. He believed that the spirit of the old toast that was prevalent at the beginning of the century was present still: "Our Country; may she in her relations with foreign Countries be always right, but our Country whether right or wrong." He did not think that spirit was in any sense mitigated or diminished by the fact that we were willing to submit differences to peaceful arbitration, and the fame of the authors of this Treaty which had for the first time placed upon a permanent basis of arbitration the relations of two great countries, should indeed be undying. He thought there were few of them, when they had seen the papers upon the subject, but would feel that upon our side the credit of this great act was mainly due to the sustained exertions and great ability of Lord Salisbury. There was one other subject he would like to mention. It was the proposal to establish a Board of Agriculture in Ireland. That was a tribute to the exertions of the Recess Committee, initiated and presided over with such signal ability by the right hon. Member for Dublin. He was aware that events had occurred which made hon. Members less inclined to regard that as a benefit than they would have done before, and that the attention of Irish Members was engaged on another and a far more serious matter. Whatever respect they might pay to the Report of the Royal Commission, few men who had really studied that Report would say that that Report was absolutely complete, and that there were not matters which should be fairly and fully investigated and discussed before a final opinion was formed. But he would like to say, that if it were really shown upon complete materials that Ireland ought under the circumstances to receive some exemption or abatement in taxation, the Unionist Party would be perfectly willing and desirous not merely to accord Ireland that justice which was her due but a generosity which it ought to be the privilege of the wealthier country to accord. Concluding, he said he felt it a great honour to have had even a small part in approaching Her Majesty in this the sixtieth year of her reign—a reign which had, by our exceeding good fortune, proved a stately bulwark against time, and every year of which had recorded royal deeds worthy of our example and our memory, deeds penetrated by a living sympathy with her subjects, especially the poorest of them, the fruit in a noble character of suffering nobly borne. If that Parliament could catch something of the simplicity and the loftiness of her spirit he thought they might indeed feel and hope that the aspiration of the national prayer might be in part fulfilled, and that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety might be forwarded by its labours. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.), who was received with cheers, said: The first and most agreeable task that I have to perform is to acknowledge, I am sure on the part of this side of the House no less than upon that, our sense of the manner in which this Address has been moved and seconded to-night. [*Cheers.*] The noble Lord who in so graceful and excellent a manner went through the topics of the Speech, represents a name well known and long esteemed in this House—[*cheers*]—and we are glad that that name should again be present amongst us. As for my hon. and learned friend, I cannot treat him as a neophyte. [*Laughter.*] It is a name well known to fame in many a field—[*laughter*]—and in every exercise he has hitherto attempted he has always been in the first rank. I doubt not in the new arena upon which he has entered he will be as distinguished in that field to which we are so happy to welcome him. [*Cheers.*] The first topic in the Speech to which I would desire to address myself is that which I think is the most important and the most satisfactory. I mean the relations of this country to the United States of America. [*Cheers.*] Friendship and goodwill between Great Britain and the United States must always be a first and a cardinal principle of English policy. I congratulate the Government upon the conclusion of the differences which have arisen in regard to Venezuela. I feel confident that in the progress of these negotiations the right hon. Gentleman opposite will acknowledge that nothing has been done from this side of the House to embarrass the Government or make any difficulties in the way of bringing that matter to a satisfactory conclusion. [*Cheers.*] Therefore, I will not upon this occasion indulge in any criticisms as to the position which might have been occupied at an earlier stage of the negotiations, because I rejoice so much at the settlement which has been finally arrived at. With regard to the general treaty, that is a matter of still greater congratulation, because that is a measure which is intended, and I trust will have, the result of establishing peace and good will with America upon a permanent footing, and not only that, but that it will be an example, as is said in the Speech, and was so well said by the noble Lord, to the rest of the world, and that it will have a beneficent effect. [*Cheers.*] Whatever else the Government may do, or may have done, this at least is a work upon which they may be congratulated, I think, by everyone, and it is a work for which we may give them unstinted praise. [*Cheers.*] If it does anything to remove or to eradicate the spirit of suspicion, of jealousy, of hatred, in international relations, which appears to me to be the besetting sin of our day and generation—["hear, hear!"]—it may do something to relieve us from the burden of these senseless armaments which oppress the world—[*cheers*]—and which, I presume, is that state of the world which is referred to in the economical paragraph of the Speech. [*A laugh.*] As President Cleveland has properly said, it removes not only the danger of war, but it removes the apprehension of war, when we know that there is a peaceful tribunal whenever quarrels arise—["hear, hear!"]—and, referring to what has been said by the mover and seconder of the reign of Her Gracious Majesty, I think we may congratulate ourselves that the century, which opened with universal war, concludes at least with this omen of peace. [*Cheers.*] I think that no better commemoration of the 60th year of the Queen's reign can be found than that the Government of the Empire over which she rules should have been among the first to set the example which is established by this Treaty of Arbitration. [*Cheers.*] There is infinite credit due, I think, to those who have accomplished this great work —first of all to the Governments by which it was conceived, and also to the agents by whom it has been accomplished. Those who have had to watch, as I have had to watch, the conduct throughout these matters of Mr. Secretary Olney will have recognised his real desire for peace and the great ability he has shown—[*cheers*]—and when I speak of Sir Julian Pauncefote I speak of a man of unrivalled abilities, of one of the most helpful and accomplished servants of the Crown. If these are the men who have taken part in this great transaction, I think we ought not to forget the labourers under the heat and burden of the day who prepared that opinion which has been finally accomplished. [*Cheers.*] I cannot forget the name of a gentleman no longer, I am sorry to say, a member of this House—I mean Mr. Cremer—[*cheers*]—who, through good report and evil report, when this matter was the subject too frequently of ridicule, did so much good in this country and in foreign countries to forward the cause of arbitration. [*Cheers.*] I now turn to a topic, I am sorry to say, much less auspicious, and that is the condition of South Africa. The Speech refers to the deplorable events which have there occurred and the lives which have been so unfortunately lost. The House of Commons is going to undertake an inquiry into the condition of things in South Africa—a most important and responsible inquiry. What the nature and object of that inquiry are have been stated by the Colonial Minister in language which leaves no doubt upon this subject. He said:

> "The true character of the action of those who broke into a foreign State which is in friendly Treaty relations with Her Majesty in time of peace, is an act of war, or rather of filibustering. If it can be proved that the British South Africa Company set this invasion in motion, or were privy to this marauding action, Her Majesty's Government would at once have to face a demand that the charter should be revoked and the corporation dissolved."

Upon that statement by the Government the South Africa Company demanded

an inquiry in these words. They requested Her Majesty's Government

> "to institute an Inquiry, with authority to call for papers and examine witnesses on oath, into the circumstances under which Dr. Jameson burst into the South African Republic."

That was the demand of the company, and that, of course, will be one of the main subjects of inquiry by the Committee. A great deal has happened since that time, a great deal that is much to be deplored. The native rising has been suppressed, as is stated in the Speech, but of the condition of that country at present very little is authentically known in this country. The authority of the Chartered Company has been suspended for the present in regard to all its police and military authority, and the Committee, of course, will have to consider the future government and organisation of that gigantic territory. These will be amongst the things into which they will have to inquire, but of this I feel confident, that the Committee will address itself to two main objects. One object is to restore the good feeling and the cordiality between the two races which occupy South Africa, which have been so rudely shaken, and upon whose good will and friendship the future of South Africa depends. That, I think, will be their first object. Their second object will be to vindicate in the face of the world the character of this nation's good faith in its dealings with neighbouring countries, and we shall repudiate the charge which has been too often, and I believe falsely, brought against us—that we are willing for aggrandisement and gain to encourage proceedings which we are unable to defend. [*Cheers.*] There are, I believe, the principles upon which a Committee of this House would act in a matter of this description. Then, Sir, there is another subject which is referred to in the Speech upon which we should desire, and I think are entitled to request, some further information from the Government — I mean with respect to their Egyptian policy. [*Cheers.*] I can cordially concur in and associate myself with the praise the noble Lord has bestowed upon the military aspect of that expedition, which has been conducted with great skill, with great ability, and with great success by the officers and the men who were engaged in that expedition; but as to the policy of that expedition and as to the necessity for it, I for one, and I believe many on this side of the House, entertain exactly the same objection we have always entertained. ["Hear, hear!"] What is its real aim and end? That is a thing upon which there has been an amount of obscurity and mystery which I think has been extremely injurious, and we ought to have some much clearer explanation of what it is the Government are really aiming at. ["Hear, hear!"] We know what was the beginning, and we want to know what is to be the end of this Egyptian policy. The nearest thing to an explanation of the meaning of that expedition I have seen was given by Lord Cromer in October last at the dinner given to the Sirdar on his return. This is what Lord Cromer said:—

> "In truth, the primary object of the campaign has been accomplished. That object, I need hardly remind you, was to relieve the pressure on the Army of a friendly nation."

That object, according to Lord Cromer, has been accomplished. Therefore, there is nothing more to do with respect to it. But there remains the question, What are the English and Egyptian interests in this matter? First of all as to the English interests, I read another speech in the recess with great interest and great satisfaction. When I want a good piece of hard common sense I generally look out for the speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [*Cheers.*] I find that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking at Darlington in October, said:—

> "What has been the history of our rule in Egypt? I do not hesitate to say that, in the interests of England alone, I wish we were not in Egypt. It imposes on us a responsibility which in very conceivable circumstances might become a very grave responsibility indeed; and unquestionably it has not improved the relations between ourselves and our neighbours in France."

That is perfectly correct. That is a very mild way of stating it. I desire to say nothing more upon the subject of English interests in the matter. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer then diverged into general philanthropy—[*laughter*]—and I want to ask now what is the Egyptian interest in the matter. We are told first that a better frontier was wanted, that there was an alarming enemy on the border of the old frontier; but the enemy does not seem to have been alarming at all. I do not profess to be a judge in these matters, but I am told by those who are that, from the point of view of a military frontier, at this moment you have a worse frontier than you had before. Then it is said that a fertile province has been given back to civilisation; but Egypt has already fertile provinces which are within the borders of civilisation, but they want one thing, and that is a good deal of money to be spent on them. I have read that projects for irrigation and drainage in these provinces have been stopped for want of money. Therefore, in the Egyptian interest you have to consider what is to be done. ["Hear, hear!"] You have landed Egypt in a very bad financial position, from which I understand it is to be redeemed by the assistance of the English purse. But when you talk of what you are going to do I should like to ask, Are you going to reconquer the Soudan? The right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, told us last Session that that was not in contemplation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I spoke of last year. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Very well; then are you going to reconquer it this year—[*cheers*]—and I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for he ought to know, are you going to do so at the cost of Egypt or of England? Everybody knows, and every prudent Statesman feels, as the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in the passage I have read, the difficulties and perils which surround this Egyptian question in connection with our international relations with the other Powers. A man must indeed be a fool who shuts his eyes to those difficulties. It is not the few hundreds of thousands of pounds that this expedition has cost you; it is the attitude of hostility in which you have placed yourselves towards some at least of the greatest Powers of Europe that costs you, not hundreds of thousands of pounds, but the millions which are involved in those armaments to which the Speech from the Throne refers, and which says the "state of the world" makes it necessary for us to keep up. But what is that "state of the world" caused by?

Can you say that the Egyptian question is not one of the elements which has brought about that "state of the world?" ["Hear, hear!"] No wonder the Chancellor of the Exchequer wishes, from the point of view of British interests, that we were not in Egypt, because if we were not there he would have a great many more millions to dispose of than he has at the present moment. [*A gesture of dissent from the* CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.] That may be a matter of opinion, and my opinion is that your armaments are largely affected by the occupation of Egypt, and I believe that this is a conclusion that cannot be denied. How has this enterprise in the Soudan improved your European relations? I have heard the false pretence put forward that it will accelerate the evacuation of Egypt. But does anyone believe that? [*Cheers.*] Why, the people who applaud that statement most are those who insist most on our continued occupation of Egypt. In the Drummond Wolff Convention Lord Salisbury signed a Treaty to evacuate Egypt without any thought of conquering the Soudan. At that time the idea did not exist for a moment that the recovery of the Soudan was a condition precedent to evacuation, and if that Treaty had been carried out Egypt would have been evacuated without the Soudan being conquered some six or seven years ago. ["Hear, hear!"] What has been the immediate effect of this transaction upon your relations with the European Powers? I will give the answer on the infallible authority of the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] This is what he said at Southport:—

> "You will remember what our position in Egypt is. We have for ten years been in Egypt, so to speak, not merely as the guardians or protectors of Egypt, but I might almost say as the trustees for Europe of Egyptian administration."

[*Cheers from the Government Benches.*] You are the trustees for Europe. What do some of the greatest Powers in Europe say to your administration of that trust? You have appropriated, as you supposed, these trust funds for certain purposes; but Russia and France have taken you into Court upon that appropriation, and the decree of the Court has gone against you. ["Hear, hear!"] We have a right to ask you what you are going to do next? ["Hear, hear!"] Are you going to proceed to reconquer the Soudan out of the funds of Egypt contrary to the opinion of two of the greatest Powers in Europe, for whom you say you are the trustees in the administration of Egypt? That is a question on which some light ought to be thrown by Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Now I pass to a subject which has deeply moved the heart and conscience of this nation, upon which I must say I think the language of the Speech referring to the massacres in Constantinople and Armenia is extremely unsatisfactory. [*Cheers.*] It does not express all that the country desired to hear on this subject from the Government of the Queen. [*Cheers.*] The massacres first began more than twelve months ago, and have been going on, more or less, constantly ever since, and what the Speech says is that the Government have called the special attention of the Powers to them. Well, they have done that for a very long time, and have induced the Powers to make the present condition of the Ottoman Empire the subject of special consideration. We know that special consideration has been going on for months —I might almost say for years—and all we are told at the end is that the conferences which the six Ambassadors have been instructed to hold are still proceeding. Twelve months ago we were led to believe—I have no doubt with perfect conviction on his part—by the Prime Minister that there was a prospect of effective action to restrain Turkey from the cruel oppression of the Armenians, but those hopes have not been fulfilled. On the contrary, in the year just concluded we have witnessed the most atrocious crimes, both in Asia and Constantinople, of which recent history affords no similar examples. The Powers of Europe have remonstrated with Turkey on the subject. Those remonstrances have been treated with contempt and defiance by the principal offender. Those who perpetrated the massacres of the past have enjoyed, and are still enjoying, perfect immunity, and for anything we know to the contrary there may be massacres to-morrow perpetrated with equal security. [" Hear, hear ! "] I am far from charging the Government with indifference to these horrible events. I believe that they have been sincerely desirous to do what in them lay to restrain a ruler who is restrained by no sentiments of humanity or of policy. [" Hear, hear " *from the Government Benches.*] But the country has a right to expect, and it is expecting from the Government an explanation why the influence of Great Britain has proved so ineffectual. But beyond a few vague statements we know nothing at all with regard to the subject. We are told by the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs that we must restrain our troublesome curiosity. But this is a matter which touches too deeply the heart and the honour of the country to be allowed to repose in the secret recesses of the bosom of the Under-Secretary, or in the red boxes by which he is surrounded. [" Hear, hear ! "] We must have some statement as to what has been done, what is being done, and what is likely to be the consequence of our action. We have no very good grounds for trusting the policy of the Foreign Office in this matter. I am not speaking of the present policy of the Foreign Office alone, but of the Eastern policy of the last 40 years. We see now what has become of that policy. The Government, so far as they have spoken, have pleaded their inaction in this matter as a consequence of the paralysis of Europe. But what is the cause of that paralysis. I think we are bound to ask ourselves how far our own policy is responsible for that paralysis. [" Hear, hear ! "] It is stated that the inaction of the Powers of Europe is due to the reluctance of Russia to act in this matter. But there was a time when Russia was perfectly prepared to act, when Russia was the natural protector of the Armenians in Asia Minor, and it was by the action of this country that that natural protectorate was taken out of the hands of Russia and was assumed by ourselves. Therefore, when you are talking of the paralysis of Europe you have to consider how it has arisen. I would state that view in the words of one certainly not a hostile critic of the present Government. The Duke of Argyle in his recent publication says this:—

> " But there was one portion of the helpless Christian population subject to Turkey for which, at the Congress of Berlin, we did ourselves most unfortunately undertake to improve on what Russia had done in the Treaty of San Stefano. And that Christian population is the only one which has, consequently, not only failed to benefit, but has now become the special victim of Turkish ferocity and spoliation. Let us look for a moment how this occurred. The change which the new words effected in the Treaty of San Stefano wounded the pride and the most justifiable ambition of Russia to be the protector of her co-religionists in provinces with which no other Christian Power had any natural connection. On the other hand it delighted the low cunning of the Turk in constituting another 'rift within the lute,' which by-and-by would be quite sure to 'make the music mute' of any effective concert by the Powers of Europe. The Turk could see at a glance that, whilst it relieved him of the dangerous pressure of Russia, it substituted no other pressure which his own infinite dexterity in delays could not easily make abortive. As for the unfortunate Armenians, the change was simply one which must tend to expose them to the increased enmity of their tyrants, whilst it damaged and discouraged the only protection which was possible under the inexorable conditions of the physical geography of the country."

Of course, it was not necessary for Russia, as Lord Salisbury says, to take a fleet across the mountains of Taurus. That is the condition of things which you changed in 1878. Lord Beaconsfield boasted of the territory and the population that he had restored to Turkey—I think he said 30,000 square miles and 2,000,000 people. Happily that broke down, and Lord Beaconsfield's great achievement, Eastern Roumelia, escaped from the clutches of the Turk, and we all now rejoice at it. But your work in Asia Minor, unfortunately, remained. You had abolished, you had destroyed, the natural protectorate of Russia there, and the consequence we now see. No one knew better than Lord Salisbury at the time that you could not rely upon the general stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin. Why in the Speech do you speak of the Treaty of Paris rather than of the Treaty of Berlin? [" Hear, hear ! "] I suppose there is some reason for it; but no doubt they were both chapters in the same policy, chapters in the policy of hostility to Russia, and of patronage of Turkey. I do not know what the distinction is—whether it is because in the Treaty of Paris there is a guarantee of the Ottoman Empire and whether it is because under that Treaty you are going to revise that guarantee; no doubt the Government will tell us something on that subject. But Lord Salisbury in 1878 saw that all these joint guarantees were of little or no use; they were vague and misty, and it was upon that account that, after making the general Treaty at Berlin, they negotiated a secret treaty. ["Before."] Well, before; it was secret before. It was because they did not rely upon the concert of Europe, and because Lord Salisbury knew you could not rely upon the concert of Europe, that he said:

> "These misty and shadowy guarantees which bind you to everything in theory, and which turn out in practice to bind you to nothing, were anything but honourable to the character of European diplomacy."

And then he said this:

> "I think it better that we should come to a simple form of engagement in which, only two Powers being mixed up, there can be no doubt as to pledges being fulfilled."

This was the pledge and aim of the Cyprus Convention. Which of the pledges of that Treaty have been or ever will be fulfilled? What were the pledges? First, that we should fight for Turkey against Russia. That has not been fulfilled, and I venture to say it never will. The next was that Turkey will reform itself. That has not been fulfilled, and never will be fulfilled. What, then, is your situation under this Convention? Are all the engagements gone, and the wretched residuum of Cyprus left upon your hands as the final outcome of this ill-starred alliance? Is that the position in which we stand in reference to the Anglo-Turkish Convention? It is a very important question not only that Great Britain, but that Europe, should know in what situation you stand in reference to the Anglo-Turkish Convention. Is it in force or is it not? The time has come when we should know, and that the world should know, whether we are bound by that Convention to fight for Turkey as against Russia in Asia Minor. The policy of 1878 was founded on hostility towards Russia; it was founded on patronage of Turkey. In my opinion, as we have always maintained from these benches, a policy more faulty in its principles and more evil in its consequences it is impossible to conceive. What we want to know is whether you stand by that policy to-day or whether you do not. You did your best to cripple and humiliate Russia in 1878, and now you complain when she will not march at your bidding. We talk sometimes of continuity of policy, but we do not desire continuity of that policy. We believe that the first necessity is a reversal of that policy—["hear, hear!"]—and I am glad to say that I see indications that Her Majesty's Government are not indisposed to reverse that policy. Lord Salisbury, at the Guildhall, said:

> "I demur absolutely to the statement that there is a permanent and necessary antagonism between Russia and Great Britain. I know of no such antagonism. I know of no cause that should give rise to it. The interests of the two countries do not seem to me likely to cross in any important matter. It is, therefore, I think, a superstition of an antiquated diplomacy that there is any necessary antagonism between Russia and Great Britain."

Sir, if we get rid of the superstition of an antiquated diplomacy we shall be delivered from the Anglo-Turkish Convention, which is the last record of that superstition. ["Hear, hear!"] When I referred to these matters last Session, the right hon. Gentleman opposite said, "Oh, Lord Beaconsfield is dead, why should you refer to him?" Well, the Beaconsfield legend may be dead and buried, but, happily, Lord Salisbury is alive to pass judgment upon that legend and upon their conjoint operations, and the epitaph he has pronounced upon it is that it is a superstition of an antiquated diplomacy. [*Cheers.*] If we are prepared to enter upon this Eastern question, which is the vital and menacing question of the future, in what I believe to be a statesmanlike attitude, and in a spirit not of hostility to Russia, but of co-operation with Russia, of treating Russia in the East, not as an enemy, but as a neighbour—["hear, hear!"]—then, I believe, you will accomplish what you have failed to accomplish up to the present, and then we may escape from the sense of humiliating impotence and make our Eastern policy not an antiquated superstition, but a living force. There is one particular inquiry I should like to make of the Government with reference to the Anglo-Turkish Convention. It has been said, "Oh, of course, we are not bound because Turkey has not reformed," but let me ask this question. Supposing that these Ambassadors ever do accomplish anything, and that reforms are pressed upon the Sultan and accepted by him, will then the Anglo-Turkish Convention revive; when these representations, whatever they are, are accepted, shall we then be bound to make war upon Russia in defence of the Asiatic dominions of Turkey? That is a very definite question which I think both this nation and the nations of Europe ought to have a clear understanding upon, for I believe if you are going to keep alive an engagement of that kind, an alliance with Turkey by which you are bound to make war upon Russia in defence of Turkey's Asiatic dominions, then I say I believe your Eastern policy in the future will be as great a failure as it has proved in the past. Upon these subjects I think it is of the deepest interest we should have definite declarations from Her Majesty's Government. ["Hear, hear!"] I have delayed the House too long already, but I wish to say a word or two upon domestic affairs. I need not say how deeply we all feel the disasters which have befallen our Indian fellow-subjects, and I need say no more upon that matter than that I am perfectly certain that the people of this country, whether individually or through the Commons House of Parliament, will take care that every alleviation of those sufferings will be given which the Government may think it fit to propose. [*Cheers.*] But at home no doubt the prospect is a cheerful one. We are ready enough to grumble and bemoan ourselves when things go badly, but I am not quite sure that Englishmen like to recognise their good fortune when things go well. I have always observed there is nothing an Englishman dislikes so much as to be told he is well off, but the fact is that the last year has been one of extraordinary prosperity, so prosperous that I think it has dispelled even that foolish scare "Made in Germany," of which we shall hear no more. [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: "No, no," *and laughter.*] The hon. Gentleman is one of the Englishmen of whom I was speaking. [*Renewed laughter.*] He sees there has been an increase of many millions—I think it is £14,000,000—in the exports of our manufactured goods, and that the imports into this country of manufactured goods have been £5,000,000. [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: "The imports of manufactured goods last year was £81,000,000."] I was comparing the increases last year, but we will not discuss that question; perhaps when we get to the Prison-Made Goods Bill, if, as the Speech says, "time permits," we may discuss it. [*Laughter.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer has let us into the secret of the Budget. I suppose I ought to condole with him, because he said last year that it was no feather in the cap of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have a large surplus. I am afraid, however, that the coming surplus will be large enough to compromise the character of the right hon. Gentleman. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has had the frankness to say that these variations had very little to do with changes of Government. No, Sir, they depend upon the vicissitudes which political science has not yet been able to analyse or forecast. Well, Sir, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, though it may not be a feather in his cap, will have a handsome surplus to dispose of. The question is, What is he going to do with it? ["Hear, hear!"] We shall hear of nothing in the way of economy. There is no mention of economy in the Queen's Speech. In old days that are now no more there used to be a time-honoured statement that the Estimates had been prepared with a view to economy. [*Cheers.*] But that was many years ago. I am not surprised at this, because I do believe that at present there are only two people in this country who have any regard to economy—namely, the present and the late Chancellors of the Exchequer. [*Laughter.*] I did not count the penultimate Chancellor of the Exchequer—whom we are sorry not to see here to-night—because he was the greatest spendthrift of all. [*Laughter.*] We know to whom you gave your surplus last year. I am delighted to find that in the present Queen's Speech nothing is said about agricultural distress. We are, of course, very glad to know that there is no cause to bemoan agricultural distress this year. [*Cheers.*] I was not long since denounced as an optimist, because I refused to believe that the agricultural interest of this country was going to irreparable ruin, and that the whole of the land would be thrown out of cultivation. ["Hear, hear!"] But I saw a miracle such as I never witnessed before—the present and the late Ministers of Agriculture dined with the Farmers' Club, and both of them were positively cheerful. [*Laughter.*] I have never known anything like it under any circumstances. The late Minister of Agriculture, speaking of wheat, mentioned the millions that had been added to the stores of the farmer, and the present Minister recited, like the ancient Israelites, the multiplication of his flocks and herds, and the manner in which, under his administration, there were a million more sheep, and I forget how many hundreds of thousands more of cattle. [*Laughter.*] It is remarkable that this year you will be asked in the Budget to add a compassionate allowance to this distressful interest of two millions of money, at the expense of the general taxpayer. [*Cheers.*] It was admitted that in good times the remission of rates would go to the landlord, and a good time, I am glad to say, has arrived; therefore we shall now know where the money goes. Of course, a part of this profit was in the quantity and excellence of the crops, and the other part in the rise of prices. I have not observed that the rise in the price of the quartern loaf has been received with universal enthusiasm. That might be thought a reason why you should not call on the general taxpayer to find these two millions of money. ["Hear, hear!"] But at all events this rebound of agricultural prosperity ought to induce even the President of the Local Government Board, whom we regret not to see here to-night, to believe that prices do not depend absolutely upon the ratio between gold and silver, which remains very much what it was when wheat was 10s. a quarter lower than it is now—["hear, hear"]—and the time may really arrive when even he may believe that values have some relation to supply and demand. [*Laughter and cheers.*] There is, however, one other question which, before these millions are disposed of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, will have to be taken into account, and that is the Irish demand founded on the Report of the Financial Commission. [*Nationalist cheers.*] I think the First Lord of the Treasury might have done well to have imitated the reserve of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day; but down in Lancashire the First Lord plunged into the matter with a rashness which alarmed some of his best supporters. ["Hear, hear!"] As far as I can understand, he thinks that indirect taxation is not of much account, and that it is a quantity that might be neglected. His words were that a man may consume or not consume, as he pleases—in a word, that if he consumes he pays, and if he does not consume he does not pay. [*Laughter.*] That settles the question of indirect taxation. Then the right hon. Gentleman says there is that in regard to indirect taxation which there is not in regard to direct taxation, and that there is an element of free-will in the matter. [*Ministerial cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Truly a Pelagian heresy. I suppose that that direct taxation is of the nature of predestinarian doctrine. [*Cheers.*] I cannot think that this was one of the most fortunate of the financial essays of the right hon. Gentleman. I have known him do better even on the subject of bimetallism. [*Laughter.*] It is, I think, universally acknowledged that indirect taxation always presses most heavily on those who are least able to bear it. That is why for 50 years, since the time of Sir Robert Peel, every sound financier has been labouring to diminish indirect taxation, and put the burden on direct taxation. ["Hear, hear!"] I am happy to think that I have had the opportunity of casting a stone upon that cairn. And now we have arrived at a point when the two are as nearly as possible equalised in England. But what is the case in Ireland? In that country three-fourths of the taxation is indirect, and I think there cannot be a more conspicuous injustice as between the two countries. [*Nationalist cheers.*] That, in my opinion, is an enormous grievance to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has disposed of the report of the Commissioners very cavalierly, and has stated that their principles of finance are utterly wrong. It seems to me that it is an entire mistake to suppose that this is a question which involves the Home Rule controversy. It is one in which Unionists and Home Rulers stand on common ground. [*Cheers.*] The question is what was the compact of the Union, and whether that compact has been faithfully carried out. The Unionists are the parties most concerned to stand by the terms of the Treaty of the Union. I will content myself by stating two propositions. The first is that by the Treaty of Union there was stipulated, on behalf of Ireland, a distinct consideration and separate treatment in respect of taxation, with a review from time to time, having regard to the relative resources of the two countries—[*Nationalist cheers*]—and that Ireland has a right to claim to be dealt with on that footing. [*Cheers.*] As to the separate treatment of Ireland, that was admitted by Mr. Gladstone in 1864, when he granted an inquiry into the matter, and I made a Motion that the Committee

"should consider the taxation of Ireland and how far it was in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Union, or just in reference to the resources of the country."

The Committee of 1864 was not moved on the question of Home Rule, but on questions of taxation. In 1890 the First Lord of the Admiralty, in granting a Committee, said:

"The question was whether Ireland gained or lost through her connection with the British Empire. Her Majesty's Government would like to have this point cleared up, and would be prepared to grant an Inquiry into the financial relations between the two countries. Certainly it was not his desire to press too hard on any portion of the United Kingdom. Of course, if it should be shown from the Inquiry that injustice had been done to Ireland in the matter of taxation, the time would come when any such injustice could be remedied."

Then he appointed his Committee, and one of the terms of the Inquiry was whether the financial relations

"are equitable, having regard to the resources and population of England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively."

And here I will say that of course the question of Scotland is reserved in the same way as this question of Ireland. Mr. Gladstone gave a pledge, and I repeated the pledge that was given, that a similar Inquiry should be made into the taxation of Scotland. When the First Lord of the Admiralty moved his Committee, my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon wanted to include Wales, but what was the objection that the First Lord of the Admiralty took? He said Wales could not be treated as a "separate fiscal entity, as was the case with Scotland and Ireland, which have separate arrangements." A great deal has been said about the words "fiscal entity." I do not myself care particularly for these metaphysical terms. The First Lord of the Admiralty invented the term "fiscal entity" but I do not rely upon it. I say there was a covenant for separate treatment. That is plainer language and more easily understanded of the people. I stand upon the words "separate financial treatment," and the First Lord of the Admiralty said there were special arrangements with regard to Scotland and Ireland, but not with regard to Wales. I think it is perfectly idle, and I cannot believe that the Government are going to take their stand on the position that there are no covenant separate financial considerations for Ireland in relation to her resources, and that there should be a review of her taxation from time to time in that regard. Then the second proposition, which I think is clearly established, is that the present taxation of Ireland is largely in excess of the relative proportion due to the resources of the two countries. I believe that is established by the evidence and by the reasoning of the Commission. The right hon. Gentleman, I know, holds the Commission very cheap, but perhaps he will excuse me when I say that, after the careful deliberation they have given to this subject, their opinion is of greater weight even than his. ["Hear, hear!"] On the other hand, it is alleged that there is excess of expenditure. That you can compensate exorbitance of taxation by extravagance of expenditure is not a proposition that is self-evident. ["Hear, hear!"] It may deserve consideration, and I have no doubt it will receive consideration. I think, under these circumstances, what we want and what we will ask the Government for is that they shall give us time before the Estimates are voted, and before the Budget is dealt with, to discuss this grave question of the taxation of Ireland. [*Cheers.*] I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us an answer upon that point, because it is obvious that the Address is not the most convenient manner or occasion for dealing with it. What we want from the Government is an undertaking that there shall be an early opportunity on which this matter shall be thoroughly debated in this House. ["Hear, hear!"] I will only delay the House for a few more minutes on the subject of education, which occupies a prominent place in the Speech from the Throne. I was very glad to hear the invitation to peace which was addressed to us by the hon. and learned Member, the Seconder. I can assure him there is nothing I desire more than that we should approach this question in a spirit of peace, and I really think there are good hopes that we shall do so, because this year, in contrast to last year, has this peaceful opening about it, that, as far as we can ascertain, Her Majesty's Government have not been captured by the Bishops. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*] I confess that when I read in the recess that remarkable demonstration of the Œcumenical Council of the two Provinces, when they passed unanimous resolutions which were to bind nobody, I did think we were in for a good fight. But I understand that the children of this world who sit upon that Bench are wiser in their generation. [*Laughter.*] We now learn, upon authority which is indisputable, that the rate-aiders are thrown to the lions, and, if that is so, we shall not have the drum ecclesiastic beaten by the noble Lord the Member for Rochester at the head of the Church Militant again this year; and all that makes for the peace my hon. and learned Friend desires. The Education Bill of last year had a short life and not a merry one—[*laughter*]—but the Bishops' Bill of this year has perished before it was born. [*Laughter.*] I do not even learn that the unanimous resolutions have been formally presented to Her Majesty's Government at all. The common sense of public opinion had nipped them in the bud, and if they reached the Government they seem to have been considered *in camera*, and we have not heard what took place between them on the matter. They were at all events disposed of by the right hon.

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Gentleman the other day by the remark, which seemed to me perfectly well founded, that to have adopted them, his words were, "would have been a work of political lunacy." That was the end of the unanimous resolutions of the two Provinces. Then I thought that everything would go very smoothly. The right hon. Gentleman had preached in Manchester his rather unwelcome eirenicon to the rate-aiders down there, and he preached to a united party. The party always is united—[*Opposition laughter and Ministerial cheers*]—including the Church party. But all of a sudden the truce was denounced, and the fiery crosier—[*laughter*]—was sent round. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman to his constituents was made on Saturday, and on the Sunday—the better the day the better the deed—the Bishop of Chester took up his pen, and the counsels of the Cardinal were sought by his Anglican brother in his wrath—[*laughter*]—and he inquired of the Cardinal what was to be done with this traitorous Government—the Government that was the wicked author of the Welsh Intermediate Education Bill, which had even contrived that base thing Free Education, that had ruined the voluntaries who did not like to volunteer, and desired to get the fees out of the children. He actually went so far as to turn round and say, "Would it not be better to endure, *tristes Amaryllidos iras*, even the treatment of the heretical member for Rotherham." [*Laughter.*] The Bishop and Cardinal took counsel together whether it would not be better, after all, to throw off the chosen people on those Benches and turn to the Gentiles. This is all very interesting, but it did not seem exactly to tend for peace. But they have good reason for what they said. They said they thought if the Conservatives were turned out of office they might prove again the denominational lions which they had formerly been before they occupied those benches. His Eminence the Cardinal, I think with a little more Christian charity than was displayed by the Anglican *malleus ministrorum*, pleaded that some room should be granted to Her Majesty's Government—a limp and flabby Government he called them [*laughter*]—for repentance, and that at least they should be exhorted to piecemeal contrition. [*Laughter.*] That, I suppose is the meaning of the paragraph in the Speech that if opportunity and time allow there may be other measures connected with education. But then if they remain impenitent, what is to happen to this "hand-to-mouth policy of sops and doles?" The greater excommunication is to be delivered, and the Unionist Party will be placed on an interdict, and the words of the interdict are remarkable:—

> "That other political combinations must be sought; it would become our highest prudence and our truest fidelity to the country and to God to make a political break-up"—

[*laughter*]—and the Government is to be given over to the secular arm. [*Laughter.*] There has been nothing like it since the days of Thomas à Becket—[*laughter*]; and I tremble when I think that the First Lord of the Treasury may yet be seen doing painful penance at the shrine of Canterbury. [*Laughter.*] Common humanity demands that we should defend even our opponents from such an end as that. I should be extremely sorry to see the right hon. Gentleman so maltreated by the Lancashire rate-aiders, and if the Government will only adhere to the dictates of common sense, and if they will proceed in this matter on the lines on which I hope they intend to proceed, then we will promise to defend them from the Church party—[*laughter and cheers*]—and we will rescue one of the great parties in the State from the threatened *auto-da-fé* of the Anglican Bishops and the Cardinal. [*Laughter.*] If we approach this question—as on our part, I will venture to say, we are prepared to do—from the national point of view, and not from the denominational point of view—[*cheers*]—then we may do practical good in this matter. We are told, and I dare say truly told, that the Voluntary Schools are not as attractive as they ought to be, that their resources are insufficient, and that therefore their education is inferior. But that is true of some Board Schools too. But what we who care about education a great deal and about denominationalism very little, what we desire is that education should be made as good as possible in all schools. ["Hear, hear!"] In that spirit we desire to approach this question, and if the Government will also approach it in that spirit then I can tell my hon. and learned Friend the Seconder of the Address that his peaceful desires will be fulfilled. Our position is perfectly well known. If additional aid is to be given to Voluntary Schools it must be given in fair terms only to schools that really volunteer, and it must be given fairly as between Voluntary and Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Our position is perfectly clear, we take our stand upon the fundamental principles of the settlement of 1870. We adhere to the principle of that settlement, and in that spirit we shall be ready to give fair and reasonable consideration to any proposal of the Government which has for its object, not to endow denominationalism, but to educate the nation. There are other measures mentioned which it is not necessary for me to specify, and upon these measures, or many of them, we are ready to assist the Government, as we assisted them last year with measures that seemed to us useful. We assisted the Government with the Irish Land Bill, and with other measures of which I will only mention one. We assisted the Government in passing the Conciliation Bill. I believe that Bill has proved in some cases extremely useful, but I cannot avoid here, in the House of Commons, expressing my deep regret and condemnation of the course Lord Penrhyn has taken ["oh, oh!"] in refusing to act under the provisions of that Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] It is very little encouragement to pass Bills of this kind when we find the Conciliation Bill treated in this maner. I say nothing of the "omnibus" clause which the Government, with becoming modesty, have attached to the end of the Speech with the condition "if opportunity can be found." It would be cruel to anticipate the future of these unborn innocents, and all I will wish these embryos is a good delivery. I desire in conclusion to say that with those differences of opinion to which my hon. and learned Friend has referred as occurring in the conversation between Carlyle and Sterling we are willing to co-operate in showing that the House of Commons is willing and able to discharge the great duties imposed upon it. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.), on rising was received with loud cheers. He said: No one will, I think, grudge the right hon. Gentleman the extended use he has made of the opportunity the Speech gives him to discuss all the matters contained in that Speech, and I must frankly add some matters not contained in that Speech at all. But I will endeavour to compress the brief remarks I have to make in answer within narrower limits than the right hon. Gentleman found it possible to occupy. Before I come to what I may call the more controversial portion of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks, let me associate myself with him in the graceful and well-deserved compliment he paid to my noble Friend who moved and my hon. and learned Friend who seconded the Motion for the Address upon the speeches delivered this evening. I confess I have always thought that this duty of moving and seconding the Address is among the most difficult which Members of this House can ever be called upon to perform, and I am always thankful that I never had to pass myself through this trying ordeal. But my two friends have to-day acquitted themselves in a manner that I am sure commands approval in every part of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] My noble Friend the Mover has spoken for the first time within these walls this evening, and I think everybody will cherish the hope that he has not spoken for the last time, but that he will often again give us that admirable, lucid, and complete statement of his views such as he has given us on the present occasion. ["Hear, hear!"] My hon. and learned Friend who seconded is an ornament to a profession which is supposed to relieve its members from any undue diffidence in any walk of life—[*laughter*]—but even he, I think, must have faced with something less than perfect equanimity the very difficult ordeal out of which he so triumphantly emerged. We all listened, not for the first time in his case, to a method of speaking which I can assure him will be, and must be, agreeable to the House, whatever subject he desires to treat. ["Hear!"] Coming to the substance of the right hon. Gentleman's speech I may pass as rapidly as he did over the subject of Venezuela. I should not indeed have mentioned it at all except that the right hon. Gentleman asked for my assent to the proposition he ventured upon, that during the long period of negotiation he and his friends did their best to prevent any unnecessary difficulty being raised in the matter between the British Government and the Government of the United States. I most cordially give the right hon. Gentleman the certificate for which he asks, that he behaved with admirable patriotism and discretion through all the Debates of last year, and if negotiations have now come, as they certainly have, to a happy conclusion, a conclusion anxiously desired on both sides of the Atlantic, that is undoubtedly in part due to the patriotic course pursued by the Opposition in this connection. ["Hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman dwelt at length on the Arbitration Treaty. The Venezuela Treaty deals with a temporary and individual phase of international difficulty, but the general Treaty with America, though nominally limited to five years, may, I hope, be a perpetual guarantee of peace between the two great English-speaking communities. ["Hear!"] I am the last to suppose that treaties and protocols will ever bind aggressive ambition or foil the cupidity of nations, or heal the difficulties springing from racial jealousies or religious differences, but when a treaty of this kind is entered into as between two nations sprung from the same stock, speaking the same language, having the same religion, enjoying Constitutions closely allied in character, neither animated by aggressive political ambition, then I think we may hope with some confidence that we shall have laid a deep and sure foundation of that lasting peace on which so much of the future progress of the world inevitably depends. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman after dealing with the Treaty of Arbitration passed from America to Africa, and he made certain observations with regard to results which he hoped would follow from the labours of the South African Committee, which will begin in a few days. The right hon. Gentleman expressed a hope that through that Committee the bonds of confidence between the British colonies and communities in South Africa generally would be more strongly bound. Everyone, in whatever quarter of the House he may sit, will echo the hopes and expectations of the right hon. Gentleman, and if, indeed, the labours of that Committee should end in a result so fortunate for the Empire we may well rejoice that the Committee should have been appointed, and its labours, however arduous and protracted, will have a worthy and permanent result. ["Hear, hear!"] So far I am in agreement with the right hon. Gentleman in his observations as to the policy on the continent of Africa. But when he leaves the southern portion of that continent and deals with the policy in Egypt, then differences between us make themselves felt. The right hon. Gentleman told us that in spite of the success which has attended operations in the Soudan, he is as unalterably fixed in hostility to the policy that has restored Dongola to civilisation as he was during the Debates of last Session. I confess that surprised me very much, for I remember one of the principal reasons alleged against the policy of the Government was that military disaster would dog its footsteps. Now, it being conclusively proved that a province can be restored without the semblance of a military disaster, I should have thought on his own showing and from the arguments used during last year's Debate that a large portion of the right hon. Gentleman's objections would be swept away. ["Hear!"] But he says the policy in the Soudan will increase the difficulties of English policy generally in the face of other European Powers. I do not agree with that view. I do not at all deny that the English position in Egypt has been one which may and will have caused anxiety to British and foreign diplomatists; but when the right hon. Gentleman goes on to tell us that our fleets and armies must be kept at their present level simply and solely—or principally—because we went into Egypt—under a Government of which he was a Member—["Hear, hear!"]—in 1880 and have stayed there through successive Governments—of some of which he was a Member—I am bound to entirely separate myself from the view he has taken of our foreign responsibility. The responsibilities of England are not confined to Egypt. It would not be possible, in my judgment, even if the whole episode of Egypt were expunged from history; it would not be possible in the present condition of things to diminish our naval or military force by a ship or a man. ["Hear, hear!"] The armaments which we have to keep up we have to keep up from the very nature and essence of the British Empire itself, from its enormous expansion, from the number of nations with which we are in contact in different parts of the world, and from the possibilities of quarrel which may arise between us and our neighbours in almost every continent. Those are the origin of the great obligations under which we lie with regard to our armaments, and those obligations would not be materially diminished, in my judgment, even if the evacuation of Egypt were accomplished within the next few days. [*Cheers.*] It was surely a strange transition on the part of the right hon. Gentleman from a complaint that we had withdrawn from the tyranny of the Khalifa the fair province of Dongola to a complaint that we still left under the rule of the Turk certain provinces of Armenia. ["Hear, hear!"] I cannot bring together in one focus these two halves of the foreign policy of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends. I cannot understand why it is a monstrous iniquity on the part of this country to use its influence in Egypt for the restoration to order and law, security and prosperity of a province groaning under the tyranny of a usurper—I cannot understand why this is an iniquity while it is an equal iniquity that we do not sacrifice vast national material interests in dealing with misgovernment in other parts of the Turkish dominions. I think hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite should choose on which leg they mean to stand; on which half of the argument they mean to depend. If it be wrong for us, in no spirit of reckless adventure or crusade, to restore to Egypt the province which she formerly held, and which it is undoubtedly for the advantage of humanity she should hold again, then surely all this pressure upon us to indulge in a spirit which would be one of reckless adventure in other parts of the Eastern world, must be even less worthy of praise. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman quoted something I apparently said in answer to him on a precisely similar occasion last year. I confess I had forgotten my own speech last year on the

Address, and I had equally forgotten his. When, however, he made a quotation he reminded me of the fact that he made exactly the same speech last year upon this subject of our Eastern policy. Last year and this year he fought his old battles over again; he rehearsed his ancient glories. He went back to 1878, he again denounced Lord Beaconsfield in periods to which we are well accustomed; and though I admired on this occasion, as I always admire, the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman, I confess I prefer the vintage of rather more recent date. [*Laughter.*] Even the best wines may be too old, and I do think the old controversies of 1878 which the right hon. Gentleman has thus endeavoured twice running, with only scant success, to revive, may well be allowed thenceforth to sleep their last sleep in the dusty pages of "Hansard." [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman hinted, if he did not actually state, that he thought the European concert was not an instrument or the best instrument by which reforms in Turkey could be effected. Everybody must admit that the co-operation of six individuals or six Powers may work more slowly, with more difficulty, and be subject to more accidents and interruption than the action of a single individual or Power; but if the right hon. Gentleman really means to suggest that the Government are wrong in the policy they have been pursuing, then I join issue with him absolutely. I think it has been conclusively shown by men of various politics and of large experience, Lord Rosebery, Lord Salisbury, and other Statesmen for whom the right hon. Gentleman has, or has expressed, great respect, that the policy which the right hon. Gentleman did not perhaps recommend, but which he appeared to wish to insinuate, is not a policy which this country can safely adopt. I think it would be actual insanity if we were, either by word or by deed, in this House or elsewhere, to suggest that the condition of things which we wish to see established or re-established in the East is the isolated predominance of any one Power in the affairs of Turkey. ["Hear, hear!"] I trust that the joint action of Europe may produce results earnestly to be desired in the interests not only of the populations of Turkey but of European peace, and certainly every indication which I have of what is going on in Constantinople leads me to make anticipations which are not the reverse of sanguine in their character in this respect. [*Cheers.*]

Sir W. HARCOURT: The Treaty of Paris?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: To mention the Treaty of Paris is merely to mention an historical fact. The signatories to the Treaty of Paris, by that instrument and by subsequent instruments, have got, as it were, a *locus standi* in Ottoman affairs, and feel themselves justified, in the words of the Queen's Speech, in considering the condition to which that Empire has unhappily been reduced. There is one point I omitted to mention when dealing with that portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in which he criticised our Soudan policy. I have to say in connection with that, and in connection with the known incident of the refusal of the Courts of Law to sanction the advance from the Caisse, that a Vote will be taken to advance to the Egyptian Government the sum repaid to the Caisse in accordance with the judgment of the Court of Appeal. As to any further action contemplated in the coming season, that action in the Soudan will be mainly for the consolidation and union for strategical and commercial purposes of the territories already under the Egyptian Government. We shall ask Parliament at a very early date to sanction our advance to Egypt, and that will afford a convenient opportunity for discussing, and if need be of criticising, the action of the Government in this matter. I think I have now surveyed, rapidly, but still adequately, the observations of the right hon. Gentleman on foreign affairs. With regard to home affairs he was discursive and amusing. [*Laughter.*] He denounced my hon. Friend behind me, the Member for Sheffield (Sir Howard Vincent), for entertaining anxieties with regard to foreign, and especially German, competition. But while he was thus denouncing my hon. Friend, I am afraid he forgot that my hon. Friend has an ally and a co-religionist in this matter in no less a person than Lord Rosebery. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*] No man has devoted more time and energy to arousing public interest to the necessity for technical education and other methods of promoting industrial progress than has Lord Rosebery in recent years. Then the right hon. Gentleman turned to the congenial task of criticising and misrepresenting a speech which I recently made in Manchester. He opened fire upon the financial relations between this country and Ireland just an hour and ten minutes after he rose to address the House; and I really feel unequal at this hour of the evening and on the present occasion even to touch upon a subject of which we shall doubtless hear much, but which, I think, should not be treated at the fag-end of a speech or in stray and discursive references to other speeches made in the country. I shall doubtless have an opportunity of giving my views to the House when the proper time comes, and defending, if defence be necessary, anything which I may have said elsewhere than on the floor of the House. In the meantime, perhaps it is only necessary for me to say, on behalf of the Government, that in our judgment the late Commission, whether it deserves all the encomiums passed upon it by the right hon. Gentleman or whether it does not, at all events was guilty of sins of omission. There were large tracts which they were bound to investigate, and which they refused to investigate, and it is impossible to form a judgment—["oh!"]—upon some branches at all events of this controversy without carrying further the investigations which they themselves so suddenly, so arbitrarily, and so inexplicably dropped. Under these circumstances we shall take measures for carrying out those further investigations—

MR. EDWARD BLAKE (Longford, S.): When?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): How?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: And though this would not be a convenient moment for stating precisely the terms of reference by which the future investigating body will be bound, I shall be in a position to state those terms, I hope, in a very few days.

*MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Would the right hon. Gentleman kindly answer the question whether the Government will promise to give time for the discussion of this matter by way of special Motion on an early day?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes. I had not forgotten that; but I am glad to be reminded of it. Of course, as the House will see at once, there is a legitimate opportunity now for raising this question by an Amendment on the Address. I understand from what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite that he would prefer, and his friends would prefer, and Gentlemen from Ireland below the gangway would prefer, that a separate and independent occasion should be given at a later period for the discussion. The Government will be very glad to meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, but, of course, it must be understood that we are by adopting that course, absolved from discussing the question on the Address. To us it is a matter of indifference which occasion is taken, but clearly we ought not to have both. [*Opposition cheers.*] I gather, then, that a separate discussion after the Address, but before the Budget—["Hear, hear," *from the Nationalists*]—would meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I, on the part of the Government, am quite prepared to give a pledge that that opportunity will be provided. The only other point on which the right hon. Gentleman dwelt was the education controversy and the Education Bill out of which that controversy would arise, and the right hon. Gentleman made very merry over the epistolary efforts of two great ecclesiastical dignitaries and promised us his support against the Bishop of Chester and Cardinal Vaughan. [*Laughter.*] It is not my business to defend the letters of the Bishop of Chester. It was a very singular episcopal ebullition—[*laughter and cheers*]—of which, in my opinion, the less said the better for that distinguished prelate himself. But when the right hon. Gentleman promises me the support of himself and his friends in regard to the coming Education Bill, though I am grateful for this mark of his consideration and regard, I confess that I found very slender hopes upon it. The right hon. Gentleman is prepared, no doubt, to give us or sell us his support on conditions. I think it excessively unlikely that these conditons will be satisfied, and, though

I have every hope and expectation that the Bill which will be immediately introduced is one that will receive general support, at all events on this side of the House, and although I believe that it will do much, indeed, we may hope it may do all that may be necessary in order to preserve from extinction the great body of Voluntary Schools in this country, I entertain no personal hopes whatever that it is a Bill that will be passed by consent. The Bill will be passed, but not, I think, by the cooperation of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; and, although I shall gratefully accept any assistance which he may think it his duty to offer, I shall not make my plans for the Session on the hypothesis that he is going by speech and vote to give me that cordial cooperation which upon some other less controversial matters I have now and then enjoyed in the past. But though I doubt not our Debates will be sharp, I hope they will also, comparatively speaking, be short. I trust that this Bill, whether it be fortunate enough to meet with the approval of hon. Gentlemen opposite or not, will in any case not take up any inordinately large portion of the Parliamentary time at our disposal during the course of the present Session. That is not a matter which depends upon the Government alone or upon the Government chiefly. We shall have done our best to secure that result by reducing the measure to the smallest proportions compatible with effectiveness and givng as little opportunity for the display of unnecessary eloquence as is possible. But I say, not to the right hon. Gentleman but to my own friends upon this side of the House, that it is upon our efforts that we must rely in passing the Bill, and although I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will offer no more than fair, honest, direct Parliamentary opposition to the measure, we cannot count upon anything from him in the nature of cordial support. I now have traversed the whole course of the right hon. Gentleman's speech.

Sir W. HARCOURT: There is one question upon which I asked the right hon. Gentleman to give me an answer, and that was the view the Government take of the liabilities of this country under the Anglo-Turkish Convention.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: They are precisely what they were when the right hon. Gentleman was in office. [*Laughter.*] Having, I hope, satisfied the right hon. Gentleman upon that and on all the other points on which he exercised his undoubted right to cross-examine me in the course of his speech, I beg to conclude the few remarks I have made, expressing the hope that as the most controversial and difficult subject that it seemed likely would be discussed on this Address has been deferred to a later occasion, we may without any undue delay terminate our discussion upon it and proceed to the substantial work of the Session.

Mr. BLAKE rose to say that, after the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury that he would fix an early date for the purpose of discussing the question of the financial relations, he did not propose to persist in the motion that it had been his intention to submit, believing that it would be more convenient to the House generally and more conformable to the importance of the question to take advantage of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal.

*Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) congratulated the House on the great improvement in our foreign relations since this time last year, and especially on the conclusion of a Treaty of Arbitration with the United States of America, which he regarded as one of the greatest events of the century. He trusted that it would make war impossible henceforward between the two English-speaking nations, and in doing so it would add greatly to the power and influence of this country in Europe. But there was one dark cloud on the horizon which loomed as black and ominous as war. He referred to the shocking condition of the Armenian Christians. Our diplomacy had been an utter failure thus far. The atrocious misgovernment of the Sultan continued, and he laughed to scorn all the protests of Europe. He wished to express the deep sense of loathing with which many of them regarded the powerlessness and apathy of Europe; 100,000 of the Armenian Christians had been butchered; at least 100,000 more had perished of disease and famine, and still the Ambassadors were writing notes and exchanging civilities with the Great Assassin. He fully admitted the enormous difficulties of the situation. He had no wish to see a European war brought on, but something must be done to stay this plague, or the vengeance of God would come upon Christendom. One suggestion he wished to offer to the Government. The distress among the Armenians was worse than war; hundreds of thousands were perishing from cold and hunger; private charity was in a large measure dried up, and he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could not place on the Estimates a small sum of £100,000 to be disbursed through our Ambassador at Constantinople. It might be granted on condition that an equal sum be raised from private sources. If this were done promptly it would save the lives of thousands, and do something to assure these poor sufferers that they were not forgotten by their fellow-Christians in England. He believed it would receive the cordial support of the people of this country. He also wished to express his deep sympathy with the Indian people in the awful famine which had fallen upon their country. It threatened to become one of the worst of the century. He could not doubt that the Indian Government would do all that it could to save life, but he feared that in spite of every effort a vast number of lives would be lost. They could not forget that three millions of lives perished in the great Madras famine, and one million in the Orissa famine, and there was much room for private charity in addition to all that Government could do. The appeal for charity came rather late, it might have been made a month sooner, but he did not doubt that it would be responded to as great national appeals usually were in this wealthy country. With regard to the programme of the Session, he would first like to make a few remarks on the coming Education Bill. He was glad that this measure would be more moderate in its scope than the last one; but, on behalf of the Protestant Nonconformists, he would state in the most emphatic terms that they could not consent to further State aid to Denominational Schools without public control. They regard as utterly unjust the forcing of the children of Protestant Nonconformists into Church Schools in 8,000 parishes of England and Wales where no unsectarian school was available. The religious teaching in these schools was becoming increasingly opposed to the deepest convictions of Protestants. In some cases it was but little removed from Romanism. These schools were used, in many cases, to stamp out Dissent. No teacher could enter the staff unless he was the obsequious servant of the parish clergyman. If he or she ventured to show any independence of clerical control, such as going to a service in a Nonconformist chapel, they got immediate dismissal. They regard the teaching profession as degraded by placing the teachers at the caprice of a single man, often a bigoted ritualist, who abhorred the very name of Protestant, and considered it the main end of his life to Catholicise England. Yet these were the only schools to which the children of Protestant Nonconformists could be sent in one half of England and Wales. This state of things was absolutely intolerable, and must come to an end sooner or later. It was a misnomer to call such a system a National system of education. The Liberal Party must work for a system of public schools all over the country, controlled by the ratepayers, the teachers appointed by an elected board, and the cost of such schools must be borne by the State. The dread of a School Rate was the great weapon used by the Clerical Party to prevent School Boards being set up, and this contrivance to hinder National Education being set up must be brought to an end. If School Rates should be continued they should not exceed 3d. in the £, as Mr. Forster intended when he brought in the Education Bill of 1870. It was never intended that School Rates should run up to their present figure of occasionally 1s. in the £. The principle which the Liberal Party of the future must fight for was a system of education free from clerical control and open to all the nation on equal terms, with equal facilities to all to enter the teaching profession. Nothing short of this would be accepted as a full and final solution. He regretted that the Speech from the Throne took no notice of the important Report of the Welsh Land Commission. There would be great dissatisfaction in Wales if no action was taken upon that Report in this Session of Parliament. It revealed a deplorable state of things among the Welsh farmers. Distress was greater there than in any part of England, except the Eastern counties. Rents were much higher relatively in Wales than in England or Scotland. The competition for land was excessive, and a great portion of the farmers were verging on insolvency. The land was badly farmed for want of capital; and a crisis had arrived which, in his judgment, could not be surmounted except by a system of judicial rents and fixity of tenure, as was the case in Ireland. This was in substance the Majority Report of the Welsh Land Commission, signed by the Chairman, Lord Carrington. He pressed upon the Government to find time for a short Bill dealing with this urgent question. If this was not done, matters would go from bad to worse in Wales; and they might, perhaps, see agrarian troubles that all would lament.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said he should not have troubled the House that night but for some extraordinary statements made by the Leader of the Opposition in reference to the Eastern Question. As his right hon. Friend the Leader of the House had said, that Speech was practically a *rechauffé* of speeches made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite during last Session. But it was possible that his right hon. Friend, looking at the matter, as he was bound to do, from the point of view of the Government, and the management of the affairs of the House, rather underrated the effect of speeches like that of the Leader of the Opposition on public opinion, or the mischief they might do if allowed to pass uncontradicted. The House knew very well that a favourite pastime of the Leader of the Opposition in dealing with the Eastern Question was to endeavour to throw dust on the memory of Lord Beaconsfield. But he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that it was not Lord Beaconsfield's policy, but the reversal of that policy that had failed; and the right hon. Gentleman, in accusing the Conservative Party of an Anti-Russian Policy and of weakening and crippling Russia by their action in 1878, forgot that the Party to which he belonged, and the great Leader of that Party, Mr. Gladstone, were the Government that undertook the Crimean War, which cost this country 100 millions of money and 50,000 lives, and that began the policy of crippling Russia. Another statement of the right hon. Gentleman was that nothing had been done for the improvement of the affairs of Turkey during the last twelve months. That statement was unfounded. He hoped with his right hon. Friend the Leader of the House that the present consultation of Ambassadors at Constantinople might result in the practical amelioration of the Christian people of the Ottoman Empire. But those who knew what was happening in Turkey knew perfectly well that a good many measures of reform had been put into operation. Christian Sub-Governors had been appointed in the provinces of Asia Minor. Christian members of the *Gendarmes* had also been appointed. There had been Christian Inspectors of the Courts of Justice appointed, and there had been large sums voted by the Turkish Government, and out of the private purse of the Sultan for the relief of the Armenians in Asia Minor. These things were never mentioned by the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who criticised the action of the Government, or who affected to deal with what had happened in Turkey. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite to be moderate in their language when dealing with this question. He believed that more human lives had been sacrificed in Asia Minor during the past two years owing to the immoderate and violent language used by Gentlemen in that House than owing to any other cause. He believed that this violent vituperation in regard to the Turkish Government had had the most disastrous effect. Hon. Gentlemen professed to have the safety of these Christians at heart; he himself had the same desire, but he begged them to remember that the power in these regions was in the hands of Mussulmen, and that if they were seriously aroused, and if a time of violence broke forth again, not only the Armenians but the whole Christian population of Turkey might suffer. He, of course, held different views as to the causes of these massacres, and did not believe that the Sultan was responsible for them. It would have been the worst policy that any ruler could adopt to order such massacres as took place at the close of 1895. He was happy to be able to say that tranquillity prevailed now, and had prevailed during the last twelve months over the greater part of Turkey. He had spoken with many Turks on these questions, and they deplored as deeply as did the Christians of this country the massacres which had taken place. He had also had the opportunity of speaking to the leaders of the Armenian and Greek religions in Turkey, and he could assure hon. Members that they took a very different view to that which was taken by the supposed representatives of the Armenians in that House. Their one great object was to secure the maintenance of tranquillity, and to prevent any further outbreak of fanaticism. One of the most prominent Christian prelates in Turkey had said to him that the only two things that were wanted in Turkey now were, first, the maintenance of tranquillity, and secondly the placing of good men in power and keeping them there—not good Christians but good Turks. If our Ambassador at Constantinople, instead of indulging in a wild course of abuse and oppositon to the Sultan and the Turkish Government, had only adhered to his one object of getting well known good men in power in Turkey and keeping them there, he would have achieved a great deal for the benefit of the Turkish people. He was told that they had plenty of reforms on paper, all they wanted was their execution. The Leader of the Opposition had told them in the vague, grandiose language of which he was such a master, that his policy was that of friendship with Russia, but he did not say what was perfectly well known, that it had been Russian opposition which had steadily for the last 18 months prevented any intervention of this country in Turkey. He must know that Prince Lobanoff checked Lord Rosebery's attempt at practical intervention, and that the Russian Government did the same thing in November last with regard to the administration now in power. The policy of the Russian Government was to promote disorders in Turkey, to prevent the intervention of other Powers at all costs, and to allow Turkey to rot to pieces in order that the prize might fall into their own hands. He had never been a believer in the Concert of Europe, and the reason why Russia was now going in for it was because that was now the only way by which she could prevent intervention on the part of the other Powers in the affairs of Turkey. If Constantinople were placed in the hands of Russia, it would place her in a naval and military position of overwhelming strength, and our hold over Egypt, the Suez Canal, and even India would be most gravely inperilled. There was another policy in regard to these questions which the Government would sooner or later be forced to adopt, and that was to find allies in Europe whose interests were coincident with our own, and agree upon a policy with them. He believed that would enable England to demand any reforms from Turkey. He deeply regretted the attitude which our Ambassador at Constantinople had taken up. He believed there were signs of improvement already in Turkey, and that if tranquillity were maintained that improvement would proceed, and that possibly at no distant date the varied populations in Turkey, so opposed in history, race and religion, might be able to live together in peace and prosperity.

MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) called attention to the imprisonment in Belgium of Alderman Tillett, whose object had been a perfectly lawful one—namely, to induce the workpeople to become better organised. Alderman Tillett was kept in prison for 48 hours and then released, he believed, without trial. He asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs to impress on the Belgian Government that an Englishman was an Englishman whatever his social position might be, and that the whole force of the Government of this country was at the disposal of the poorest subjects of the Queen as much as of that of the richest and most exalted. He himself feared that this was not realised by the Belgian Government. This was not a mere sentimental complaint of imprisonment, but of the fearful insanitary condition of the cell in which for 48 hours Mr. Tillett was imprisoned. He had had the honour of knowing Mr. Tillett for many years. He was a man of great refinement for a workman, and never had a robust constitution. The cell in which he was incarcerated was in such a condition as to poison and undermine the strongest constitution. His health was probably ruined for life. Since his imprisonment he had been unable to discharge his official duties in connection with his trade association, and had been put to great expense in leaving his home for seaside resorts to better his health. Under the strong advice of medical men he had now set sail for New Zealand, which would keep him away from his work for 12 months, and even then it was uncertain whether he would, when he returned, be fit to resume his public duties. Under these circumstances he hoped the Government would insist on ample reparation being made by the Belgian Government for such an outrage on a British subject. He was afraid that Mr. Tillett's social position not being in the first rank the importance of his case might be underestimated, and consequently it might, though unintentionally, be neglected. He now wished to refer to the extraordinary speech of the hon. Member for Sheffield. If misfortunes should overtake the foreign affairs of this country, the Leader of the House would see that his weakness was in not having the hon. Member to preside over them. [*Laughter.*] He himself was perfectly horrified that an English Member of Parliament, if not himself an Englishman, should have dared, in the presence of freeborn Britons, to stand up as the public apologist of a person like the Sultan of Turkey, whose myrmidons had sent shudders and terrors throughout the civilised world by their barbarities and murders. He was astonished that the hon. Member should have defended this monster and attacked one of his fellow-countrymen, the British Ambassador, who was not able publicly to defend himself. With regard to the Government proposals on the subject of Education, he did not know whether the Government measure had been prepared, but if it was not too late he would tell the Leader of the House the secret of obtaining for it universal support from the Opposition side of the House. It was that where public money was given public and popular control should follow. No one knew better than the Leader of the House that the so-called "Voluntary" Schools were sectarian schools under another name. He did not object to the further expenditure of public money in aid of education, but if public money were voted, whether in aid of elementary schools, secondary schools, or training colleges, they, on the Opposition side of the House, would insist on public control following. If the Leader of the House would take a "tip" from him and provide for this, he would have a record Session, and be able to pose, not as Leader of a mere section of the House—including the hon. Member for Sheffield—but of the whole House and the country. What a magnificent position to contemplate. If the right hon. Gentleman was strong enough and equal to the occasion he would now have a chance which might never occur again. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"]

On the return of MR. SPEAKER, after the usual interval—

MR. DOUGLAS COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) said that there were one or two omissions in the programme of the Government as set forth in the Queen's Speech which he should like to call attention to. In the first place he should like to have seen among their promised measures a Redistribution Bill which would have divided the country into something approaching equal electoral districts, so as to get rid of the present unjust method of representation under which small constituencies were over represented, while large constituencies and places of importance were either under represented or were left without representation. The limit of 50,000 population was taken to be a proper one to entitle a borough to representation, but that limit had been widely departed from in many instances. In the first place, as regarded England and Scotland, he found that the following constituencies were represented in that House: King's Lynn with a population of 18,360, St. Andrew's with a population of 18,941, Buteshire with a population of 18,217, Durham with a population of 15,287, Penryn and Falmouth with a population of 17,454, Winchester with a population of 19,073, and Salisbury with a population of 17,362. Let him compare those constituencies with such constituencies as those of Cardiff, with a population of 132,229, Huddersfield with a population of 96,495, Hanley with a population of 86,945, Wandsworth with a population of 113,244, Romford with a population of 103,000, Deptford with a population of 101,286, and Croydon with a population of 102,695. In his view the latter constituencies were very inadequately represented compared with the former. There were moreover a large number of two-Member constituencies still left. Thus the following were two-Member constituencies: Stockport having a population of 70,263, Ipswich having a population of 57,360, York having a population of 67,000, Bath having a population of 54,551, Northampton having a population of 70,872, Stoke having a population of 75,352, and Newcastle-on-Tyne having a population of 186,300. Ireland had a representation 23 in excess of its proper proportion, such places as Newry with a population of 13,605, Kilkenny with a population of 13,722, and Galway with a population of 16,942, each returning a Member to that House. With regard to the over representation of Ireland, the present Lord Chancellor had stated at the St. Stephen's Club, that Home Rule could not be considered dead as long as the representation of Ireland at Westminster remained as large as it was at present. He could hope that, in such circumstances as he had referred to, Her Majesty's Government would give their attention to this subject. ["Hear, hear!"] Turning to another subject, that of the abolition of the Irish Vice-Royalty sham and farce which was carried on by the Lord Lieutenant at Dublin Castle, he might say that Englishmen had no desire to see Ireland governed on any different system to that under which they lived. He was in favour of getting rid of Dublin Castle altogether, as well as of the Irish Privy Council. He also advocated the establishment of Royal residences in Ireland. It was no wonder that there should be disloyalty in Ireland when the Irish people never saw any member of the Royal family in consequence of there being no Royal residence in the country. As for the Dublin Castle system, it seemed strange at first sight that its abolition should be opposed by the hon. and learned Member for North Tyrone. That hon. and learned Gentleman speaking upon the subject said:—

> "He himself should oppose, if it ever cropped up, the abolition of the office of Viceroy in Ireland, because it was essential to working out the principle of Home Rule and the establishment of an Independent Legislature for Ireland."

Again the hon. Member for the Scotland division in speaking on the same subject said:—

> "he would most strongly and vehemently oppose any such proposition, because he regarded the Viceroyalty as one of the distinct marks of Irish nationality which Irish Nationalists would be very foolish indeed to surrender."

These observations showed the necessity that there was for getting rid of the existing separate system of Government for Ireland. He should like to ask hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite whether they had dropped Home Rule altogether out of the Liberal programme. In January 1895, the National Liberal Federation had passed a Resolution to the effect that Home Rule still held a foremost place in the programme of the Liberal Party, and he should like to know whether that was their opinion at the present time. He should also like to know who was the real leader of the Liberal Party. Speaking on this subject at Dewsbury, the right hon. and learned Member for East Fife had said:—

> "They were going up to Westminster in a few days with full confidence in the sagacity of their Leader and in the discipline and loyalty of their rank and file—[*cheers*]—and with the most strenuous determination to use to the full in the promotion of progressive, and in the arrest and defeat of reactionary, legislation all the legislative weapons and opportunities of Party warfare."

On the other hand, Mr. Russell had said:—

> "Whom does the Liberal Party follow just now? It follows no one absolutely; the leadership is in commission, and the Party picks and chooses, and follows one man on one subject and another on another. Lord Rosebery gives us the right lead on Home Rule, Sir Wiliam Harcourt on finance, and Mr. Asquith on social reform."

They also wanted to know from the hon. Member for Northampton what took place early in 1894, when Mr. Gladstone resigned the Premiership. Writing in *Truth* on October 29, 1896, the hon. Member said:—

> "It will be seen, therefore, that the Liberal Party has had to thank the majority of Mr. Gladstone's last Cabinet for depriving us of the invaluable services of that trusted veteran; for preventing an appeal to the country on the action of the Lords; and for the dreary ploughing of the sands of the sea that made the Party ridiculous in the sight of men and angels; as well as for having sacrificed that

keystone of Liberalism, the presence of the Liberal Premier in the House of Commons."

He looked forward to the further disclosures of the hon. Member with considerable curiosity. They had heard a good deal in the last few weeks about the Report of the Financial Relations Commission. The mere perusal of the names of the Commissioners was enough to show that this was a packed Commission, packed for a special object, the pasing of the Home Rule Bill. Its conclusions, therefore, appeared to him to be perfectly valueless, and he did not think that the Party opposite would be able to make much capital out of the Report. The Opposition were handicapped enough already by the adoption of the policy of Home Rule. They would only increase their difficulties by telling the British taxpayers that they must provide £2,700,000 a year more in order that Ireland might be taxed as a separate taxable entity. It was admitted that Irishmen individually had no grievance; in fact in the matter of taxation they were better off than Englishmen and Scotchmen. Scotchmen might have a grievance, but Irishmen had none. Referring to the grant of £200 made by the First Lord of the Treasury to George Brooks, the plaintiff in a recent trial, the hon. Member described him as a Radical Unionist of the type manufactured in West Birmingham. Grants such as that made in this case were the price which the country had to pay to enable the right hon. Member for West Birmingham to masquerade as the leader of a distinct party, although he sat on the front Ministerial bench. With reference to the promise of relief to the Voluntary schools, he expressed his obligations to the Government for the prominent place which they had given to the subject in their programme. He trusted that there would be no drawing back and no flinching, and that by the 31st of March the Voluntary schools would have obtained that assistance to which they were entitled. He hoped that the assistance given would be sufficient not only to enable them to meet the demands made upon them by the Education Department, but also to stand their ground in the severe and ruthless competition of the School Boards.

Mr. Douglas Coghill.

Mr. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) observed that the hon. Member who had just sat down had spoken about everything on the earth, above it, and below it, and had attacked with perfect impartiality everybody on his own side of the House and everybody on the Opposition side with the exception of himself (Mr. Labouchere). For the praise which the hon. Member had extended to him he was very grateful. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs would remember that the Leader of the Opposition had asked for certain explanations with regard to the attitude of the Government towards the Cyprus Convention. The right hon. Member would, he thought, admit that no answer was given by the Leader of the House to the questions that were put to him. In fact, the Leader of the House rather evaded those questions, saying that his views on the subject were identical with those of the Leader of the Opposition. Well, they knew the views of the Opposition. Mr. Gladstone, speaking for his Party, had declared that he regarded the Convention as an "insane Convention." The right hon. Member for North East Manchester, when Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was understood to say in the House that the Convention was dead, but when reference was made to Hansard it was found that the word "dead" had become "dormant." Were they to understand that the Convention was "dormant" at the present time? He really did not see how they could expect Russia to aid and abet efforts to establish good government in Armenia if the result of those efforts would be to revivify a Treaty which was absolutely aimed by us against Russia. He did not think it a fair answer to say that the opinion of the Leader of the House was precisely the same as the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition, unless they were thereby given distinctly to understand that this Treaty, as far as the guarantee of Asia Minor was concerned, was not only "dormant," but dead. They ought also to have a clear understanding that the papers which were to be published would be presented almost immediately, that they would be full, and that as soon as they had been presented an opportunity would be given to the Members of the House to explain their views fully and to criticise the attitude of the Government.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said that he should not have risen at that moment if the Government had made an answer to the appeal of the hon. Member for Northampton. Whilst he agreed that a general discussion on the subject of Armenia might wisely be deferred, he held that with regard to the Asia Minor Convention something ought to be said that night. He had dissociated himself from the extreme forms of agitation in the recess, but whilst he thought that that agitation was in some respects open to criticism, he thought that in the tameness of the debate and of the action taken that evening an error in the opposite direction was committed. They had hardly done justice to the deep feeling that existed in the country upon this question. The country naturally expected information. The reply of the Leader of the House to the Leader of the Opposition was rather calculated to set up the Asia Minor Convention as a more substantial fact than he had taken it to be. The Government in 1880 regarded that Convention as dead. The massacres that occurred at that period were quite as horrible as those that had occurred recently. The right hon. Member for Aberdeen at that time disapproved the removal of the military Consuls from Asia Minor, the creation of those Consulates being an essential portion of the Asia Minor Convention. As to what was the general position of the Government in relation to the Asia Minor Convention, there could be no doubt at all; it was something very different from what had been described to the House in the present Debate from either of the front Benches. It was absurd to suppose that the Conservative Government of 1878 concluded that Convention for the mere purpose of befriending Turkey; the object must have been some supposed advantage to ourselves. It was, no doubt, felt by the Government of 1878 that it would be impossible to induce the British public to defend Turkey, even though British interests might be supposed to demand it, if Turkey would not reform herself; and therefore the Convention was made conditional in form. So little did the Turks regard it as an advantage to themselves that they were the first to ask to be released from it. The Convention was always condemned by the Liberal Party; and he was obliged to say that what had happened had absolutely justified the condemnation. In the opinion of the Government of 1880 the island of Cyprus was worthless to this country, and its possession a source of military weakness. At that time the Convention was looked upon as dead, and the action we took was taken entirely under the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin in concert with all the Powers. In the Identic Note of 1880 the French Government played a great part, and the strongest language of menace was used as to what would happen to the dominions of the Porte if reforms were not executed. Therefore we departed entirely from all intention of acting under the Asia Minor Convention. Our action failed in spite of circumstances which were singularly close to those of the present day. England and Russia, acting together, produced a scheme of reforms consistent with the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin, and it was laid before the Porte. The scheme was accepted by all the Powers, but not by the Porte; and the Government of this country, in spite of the horrible character of what was happening in Armenia, was unable to secure the assent of the Government of the Porte. He, however, believed that if the United Kingdom, Russia, and France were actually united in pressing upon the Porte a policy of reform they could easily obtain serious guarantees of better government in Turkey. He earnestly desired to obtain reform in Turkey consistent with the existence of the Government of the Porte, because he shrank from the horrors which would happen in case a general partition of Turkey were attempted. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, it depended upon Russia, in the last instance, whether reforms in Turkey were secured; but doubtless the worthless possession of the island of Cyprus might be made a factor in a policy of pressure, which he believed for the sake of the Porte itself, and certainly for the sake of the European Powers, ought to be followed. Cyprus might with advantage be handed over to Greek rule, under the guarantee of Russia, England, and France, a step which might be the beginning of effective means of bringing pressure to bear on the Porte. There were one or two other matters to which he wished to refer upon the present occasion. There were, for instance, the departures from the positive promises which the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had made to the House in regard to our Protectorates. Frequently attention had been called to the fact that slavery existed in Zanzibar. The Under Secretary of State had given very positive promises as to the changes which were to be introduced; he told them, for example, that when Mr. Harding went back to Zanzibar last autumn steps would be taken immediately to get rid of the slavery there. Those steps had been postponed, and the Under Secretary had told a deputation which waited upon him that the case of slavery in Zanzibar was wholly different from the slavery which formerly existed in the West Indies. He said that the slaves and the slaveowners in Zanzibar belonged to the same race, and that the dangers and the horrors of slavery were much less under circumstances of that kind than they were in the West Indies. The right hon. Gentleman's statement was entirely opposed to fact, as in Zanzibar the slaves were of a different race to the slaveowners. But the Under Secretary used another argument which was even more startling; he told the deputation that the legal *status* of slavery had been abolished in British colonies, but not in protectorates. He could not understand how the right hon. Gentleman could make that statement in face of the fact which had been repeatedly brought to his knowledge that the Colonial Office had abolished slavery over and over again in protectorates. He had previously quoted to the right hon. Gentleman the case of the Protectorate in the Malay Peninsula, where slavery was abolished by the Colonial Office the moment it took charge of those countries. It was therefore disgraceful that the Foreign Office should continue to tolerate slavery in Zanzibar, and in a protectorate which was virtually a British colony. Turning next to the West Coast of Africa, he said that in the Oil Rivers Protectorate this country had found itself involved in a war. Some statement ought to have been made in the Queen's Speech with regard to the causes of that war. He should like to know whether the Government had received any confirmation of the extraordinary information that was to be found in the newspapers of the previous day. The wife of one of the gentlemen first reported killed, in an interview stated in effect that the whole expedition to Benin went there only out of curiosity. [Mr. CURZON *shook his head.*] He was glad to see that expression of dissent; but all these little wars strongly confirmed him in the view that the Foreign Office was not the department of the State which ought to administer those virtual colonies and carry on those wars. Nothing had been said by the Leader of the Opposition as to the new departure taken in sending a Commission to the West Indies to inquire into the sugar industry. He could not but feel that false hopes were being held out to the West Indies by this departure. It would be understood in the West Indies as meaning that some protectionist steps were to be taken for the benefit of its sugar as against the sugars of the rest of the world. [*Cheers.*] He did not believe it was probable that Parliament would assent to any proposals of that kind, even if the Commission should make them. On the question of the government of the West Indian colonies, he judged from the correspondence which he had on the subject that there was a strong feeling in those colonies for a little more freedom from administrative red-tape, more freedom to govern themselves than they possessed at present, and that the offer of financial proposals which were unlikely to be made or to be carried was being held out to the colonies as a sop instead of the administrative reforms being undertaken which the people desired. Since the Debates of last year the questions of Chitral and Kafiristan had arisen. Full details had come from Afghanistan and the frontier provinces as to the treatment extended by the Afghan troops to the unfortunate inhabitants of Kafiristan. If the facts were as had been alleged in a pamphlet issued with the authority of the Bishop of Lahore and others, nothing more horrible had occurred in the history of the relations between civilised and uncivilised people. The Ameer had received from us that which was not ours to give

—namely, a large tract of Kafiristan. The Ameer sent to that country a large force which was provided with arms by us, and which was paid by us, and the unfortunate people made a complete political submission to it. But the people stipulated for the free exercise of their religion, and the Ameer's commander-in-chief boasted of having promised to them this, while he intended all the time to break the promise.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing) said he had not seen or heard anything authentic in support of that allegation. Could the right hon. Baronet give him the facts or a copy of the document, because his information was to the contrary effect?

*SIR C. DILKE said that all the evidence in his possession as to the authenticity of the statements which had been published in India convinced him. As, however, the noble Lord had not seen the pamphlet, he would send a copy of it to him. He next called attention to the Education Bill, and the terms in which it was quoted to the House. Last year this Bill was called in the Queen's Speech "a Bill for the relief of Voluntary Schools." In reply to his question at that time, the Vice President of the Council said that, in spite of the words in the Queen's Speech, it was intended to deal with the poor Board School Districts as well. He gathered that the Bill of this year was to be practically a money clause, but the terms in which the Leader of the House gave notice of the Bill would shut out assistance to poor Board Schools. If the Government did not intend to redeem the pledge they had given on this point, and if they were to confine their Bill to Voluntary Schools, there would be extreme disappointment and dissatisfaction which would not be confined to one side of the House. The Leader of the Opposition to-night had said that the Liberal Party would support the Bill if the Government would give assistance to the poor School Board Districts which needed it. The pressure in those districts was well known, and it was admitted even by the Vice President of the Council. If the Bill was so drawn this year, as regarded its title, that it would be impossible even to raise the case of the poor School Board districts, a heavy charge of breach of faith against the Government would be justified on the part of those whose interests were involved.

MR. J. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he much regretted the cold and minimising paragraph in the Queen's Speech in relation to the events that had happened during the last 18 months in Turkey. Considering what those events had been, he certainly expected that the reference to them would have been in more serious terms. The general voice of the country had required the Government to carry out the obligations which existed under the Treaty for the protection of the Eastern Christians; but it was questionable whether Her Majesty's Government, by the manner of the language they employed, really looked upon the question with the seriousness which the country undoubtedly felt. The massacres of 1880 to 1883 were nothing in comparison with what happened last year. Not fewer than 100,000 Christians perished by slaughter, and probably as many more had perished by famine and starvation. Therefore, the state of things had reached a culmination in the last 18 months entirely without precedent, even in the annals of the blood-stained East. The Government would have to show the House that they had done everything possible in order to carry out the wishes and feelings of the country in this matter. The position of this country in regard to Eastern affairs seemed to be one of great humiliation. Our diplomacy, however excellent its intention, had certainly been a diplomacy of failure. He should be sorry to prejudge the case which the Government would make when they laid papers before Parliament, and he had risen with the object of asking when those papers would be ready, what they would contain, and whether they would carry the story on from the last papers delivered last spring. He also wished to know whether the Government would give the House an early opportunity of discussing the matter. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport) denied that the reference in the Queen's Speech to the events which had happened in Eastern Europe was in cold and minimising terms. The complaint was most unreasonable. He referred to the Speech, and read the opening sentence of the second paragraph, and said he did not think hon. Members would find in the words employed any justification for the complaint of the right hon. Gentleman —["hear, hear!"]—or any ground for stating that either the Government, or individual members of the Government, had shown any lack of ability to appreciate at their proper value the disastrous incidents which had occurred in Turkey. He fully agreed with previous speakers that it would be better to discuss the question of Armenia and the events of the past six months when all the Blue-books were before the House. The Government had no lack of information about Turkey and Armenia which they were prepared to lay before the House. In fact, he doubted whether such a mass of Blue-books had ever before, in so short a space of time, been showered on hon. Members as the Government were prepared to produce in reference to this question. They had, in the first place, a Blue-book containing the papers relating to the question of Crete down to September last, which they hoped to lay on the table some time in the next fortnight. Then there would be a Blue-book containing the continuation of the correspondence about Armenia from the end of 1895 down to the end of last Session. There was a further Blue-book about the Constantinople riots in August last, which he hoped might be distributed on Thursday. Another Blue-book—and this, of course, would be of the greatest importance to hon. Members —referred to the introduction of reforms and the proceedings of the Ambassadors at the present time at Constantinople, which he hoped would also be distributed on Thursday. Finally, there were two more Blue-books containing a continuation of the narrative of events in Turkey and Asia Minor from the conclusion of last Session up to the present time, and the first of these he hoped to present in about ten days. As to whether a special opportunity would be given for the discussion of the questions to which the Blue-books related, in the absence of the Leader of the House he could give no pledge, but for his own part he could not see any difficulty in the matter. Last Session the subject was discussed on a Tuesday afternoon on a motion brought forward by a private Member. If such an opportunity should not be secured this year, he saw no reason why, on an early date, one of the Foreign Office Votes should not be put down in Supply on a Friday in order to enable hon. Members to discuss the question. He would undertake to communicate the wishes of hon. Gentlemen to the Leader of the House. He had listened carefully for the instances of *mala fides* on his part which the hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean hinted at, but he had failed to recognise them. As to the ending of slavery at Zanzibar, what he had said was that it would be simultaneous with Mr. Hardinge's return to Zanzibar. Mr. Hardinge was now on his way out, and when he reached Zanzibar he would proceed to put in force the instructions which he had received. As this question was to be raised on an amendment to the Address he would not say any more at present, but at the proper time the House would be placed in possession of the instructions which had been given to Mr. Hardinge. As to the unhappy events in the Niger Coast Protectorate, he was sorry to say that the Government were as ignorant as the House as to the causes of this unfortunate expedition to Benin. The last communication which the Foreign Office had from the Acting Consul General, Mr. Phillips, who had unfortunately lost his life since, was dated November last. Mr. Phillips pointed out the necessity of taking a strong line and of conducting operations against this chief, who had steadily ignored and evaded the treaty into which he had entered with us. But the expedition which Mr. Phillips asked Her Majesty's Government to sanction had not been authorised, as it was thought better to defer it. The next news was that the Acting Consul General had gone up country with a party, unarmed, and that he, with the bulk of his followers, had been massacred. That this expedition could have been undertaken out of curiosity it was not possible for one moment to believe. Mr. Phillips must have thought himself capable of securing his ends by pacific means. When further information had been received it would be given to the House. The right hon. Baronet had made his familiar assertions that these protectorates would be much better administered by the Colonial Office than by the Foreign Office, but he had never adduced any argument in favour of those assertions. In speaking of the West India Sugar Commission the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that its appointment would hold out expectations which must be disappointed. The best answer to such fears, if entertained on the Opposition side of the House, was the fact that the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Berwick Division, had a seat on that Commission. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) argued that the discussion of the Armenian question had better be postponed, but, in view of the urgency of the question, he hoped the Leader of the House would give a day for the discussion before the Vote on Account was taken. There was one omission in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He had made no answer to the strong attack on Sir Philip Currie which had come from the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield.

*Mr. CURZON: I answered the hon. Member last year. [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. F. S. STEVENSON said that perhaps the Under Secretary did not attach much importance to what was said by the hon. Member for Sheffield, but it was necessary to consider the effect of such a speech in Constantinople. In the eyes of the Sultan of Turkey the hon. Member was a Knight of the Order of the Medjidieh—[*laughter*]—and his attack on the Sultan of Turkey was punctuated with frequent cheers from the hon. Member for Lynn Regis. [Mr. Gibson Bowles: "The hon. Member is quite wrong."] He thought that as so much had been said with regard to the Anglo-Turkish Convention, some reasons should also be given why the Debate on that subject might also be more fittingly postponed to a later day. He ventured to think that although after all the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878 lay probably more at the root of their present difficulties than any other treaty or convention, they must not at the same time leave out of sight the fact that the course of their history during the last 40 or 50 years had tended in a similar direction, and that when the question came to be discussed it ought to be discussed in its entirety. They ought to consider, not merely the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, but also the Treaty of Paris, the Treaty of Berlin, the Tripartite Treaty of 1856, and the Schouvaloff Memorandum of 1878. Unless they took into account these instruments they would not be able to give adequate reasons for the reversal of the policy which in general was embodied in the popular mind in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878. That was a reason why the discussion on the question as a whole ought to be postponed until a later date, but the matter was of so much importance and urgency that the delay ought not to be very great. He trusted that if they were to discuss this question the Leader of the House would be able to see that they were furnished with the Blue-books as soon as possible. There were also other matters connected with the Turkish Empire on which they ought to have some information. They ought to know something with regard to what was taking place among the Druses in Syria, and also with regard to the disturbances which had been occurring in Macedonia during the last twelve months, especially in view of the fact that those disturbances, it was said, were likely to break out again in the forthcoming spring. There ought also to be some information as to the treatment of political prisoners generally in Turkey. They were told that at the present time there were no fewer than 4,000 political prisoners in the Turkish Empire who were in prison or in exile in Arabia without trial or after sham trials. Among these prisoners were not only Armenians but also a considerable number of the more enlightened among the Young Turkish Party. That was a matter which certainly called for information, and the fact that the Government were now taking their stand not merely on the 61st Art. of the Berlin Treaty, and not merely on the Anglo-Turkish Convention, but also on the other international instruments was an additional reason why the information should be given.

*Mr. R. PIERPOINT (Warrington) said he desired to say a word from the point of view of the native races of Egypt and of the Island of Cyprus. So far as the discussion had proceeded that night it seemed as though the welfare of these people did not exist at all, or was of the slightest significance, and he ventured to protest against this continual unsettlement of these native races by bringing before that House the question of the cession of Cyprus either back to Turkey or to Greece or the giving to it of its own autonomy. The people of the Island of Cyprus were very excitable, and the discussions on this subject were not only dangerous to the people but injurious to the welfare of the island. It prevented capital being invested in the island and in Egypt, because capital could not possibly be safe if they intended to go. He maintained that they had taken these people, such as the Egyptians and the Cypriots under their charge, and that they had no moral right to cast them off again simply as a move on the political chessboard. It appeared to be in the minds of some hon. Members that in the present phase of the Eastern question the proposed cession of Cyprus would please France. But seeing that by their possession of the Island of Cyprus France had been saved in the aggregate £730,000, and was saved every year over £40,000, he did not think that the cession would give France any pleasure or satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, wanted to hand the Island of Cyprus over to Greece, but he did not think it likely that if we did so we should go on guaranteeing the payment of £92,000 a year as we did now.

Mr. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) stated two reasons why he thought the offer of the First Lord of the Treasury to provide a special opportunity for the discussion of the Financial Relations Report should be accepted. The first was that a special occasion would probably make a deeper impression on the public mind in this country, and the second was that it would leave the Irish Unionist Party more free than they would be, according to the letter written in the *Times* by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, to ing to obtain redress for a proved grievance. In these circumstances he would not move the Amendment which he had handed in to the Clerk at the Table.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said no doubt the hon. Member for Sheffield considered he had due ground for the remarks he made on our Ambassador at Constantinople. He himself had not had the advantage of seeing that Ambassador, but at all events he knew that the Blue-books disclosed the fact that Sir P. Currie had invented no less than four plans for the improvement and reform of the Turkish Empire, and at this moment every one of those plans had been a failure. That was the record of Sir P. Currie's performance at Constantinople. He would not take up the defence of the Under Secretary, but he thought the right hon. Gentleman had advisedly refrained from defending the Ambassador at Constantinople. The Under Secretary himself was in the habit of attacking people in some of those speeches which with equal modesty and majesty he occasionally delivered in the country. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Member for Sheffield attacked an Ambassador, but that was not good enough at all for the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The right hon. Gentleman flew at Sovereigns. He told them in one of his speeches that he was considering the question of the Deposition of the Sultan. He did not know whether the Powers took into consideration the fact that the Sultan had a most capable army, not so large as that of some European states, but an army well clad, well fed, and well armed. He would like to know what progress this plan for the deposition of the Sultan was making, and had anything been done in regard to that plan? What Despatches had passed in reference to the manner of carrying it out? Had the plan been abandoned like others? This seemed to him more important than information in regard to reforms, massacres, and things of that kind in Armenia and other places, because it was an entirely new departure for the chosen mouth-piece of the Foreign Office to inform the country that the Powers were considering whether they were going to depose a friendly sovereign. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had attributed the Cyprus Convention to hatred of Russia, but that was really not the reason for the adoption of that Convention. The reasons for it were to be found in Despatches accompanying it written by its author, Lord Salisbury, who was author of the text as well as of the idea. He distinctly explained at the time that the reason for the Cyprus Convention was that under the then circumstances the possessions of Turkey in Asia Minor were open to attack, and that that attack would seriously affect what Lord Salisbury called the "Oriental interests" of England, and it was to safeguard those interests the Cyprus Convention was made as a protection —as the only possible and the adequate protection—not of the interests of Turkey, but of England. It was, therefore, he submitted, entirely wrong to say that the Convention was entered into out of hatred to Russia, it was entered into out of anxiety for India. The Convention was never made in return for any obligation as towards Armenia, on the contrary an undertaking was given for Armenia in return for the promise of defence given for the sake of India. These Despatches he had fully in remembrance. Of course, there was the interest England had in the future affairs of Turkey, but these were not the interests of England alone or even primarily. It was absolutely impossible to divide the Turkish Empire without a European war, unless you could stop the flow of the Danube which traversed the centre of Europe for nearly two thousand miles and was an important highway for Bavaria, Austria, Roumania, and Servia, and to suppose that Russia would be allowed to take Constantinople and close the mouth of the Danube against all Europe was impossible of belief. So long as the Danube flowed there could be no such division without a European war. That was felt everywhere, but what was also felt was that if a European war on the division of Turkey was not to be faced, at any rate something could be done to sap and ruin the Turkish Empire. When it was said the Powers were united in asking for reforms it was known that one Power, Russia, would never admit these reforms if she could prevent them. Russia desired no reform, but rather that Turkey should remain in an unreformed state looking to Russia as to a friend. That was not the interest of England, the interest of England was that Turkey should be reformed, not merely for the sake of the Armenians, but for the sake of the Moslem population. He believed that the moment had arrived, and that there was an opportunity for the reform of Turkey such as had not occurred for many years, and such as might not occur again. Without making any reflections on our present ambassador at Constantinople, if England had there as representative a sound, discreet, modest, conciliatory man, and if nothing in the shape of arrogance or insolence characterised the action of England's representative, much might be done. At this moment the Sultan was the only man from whom could be obtained any action in reforming Turkey, and if he were treated with arrogance, insult, and menace, it was impossible to expect that he would favourably listen to our proposals. Sometimes they were asked to look on this Turkish matter as if it were purely a Christian question, but it was more than that, it was a Moslem question, and more than that it was an Indian Moslem question, and he was struck, though indeed not surprised at seeing a remarkable letter in *The Times*, in reference to the feeling among Moslem subjects of the Queen in regard to this question. There was great risk in piling abuse on the head of the Moslem religion of alienating Indian Moslem subjects who could be counted at double or treble the number ruled over by the Sultan. This consideration should be present to the minds of those who were so ready to use hysterical language on this subject, and who would expect hysterics even in the Queen's Speech when Turkey or Armenia were mentioned. In all sincerity he believed there was a present opportunity of effecting a settlement in Turkey such as had never occurred before. He felt convinced that the great disturbing Power, Russia, wished for peace. She had other business in hand in the further East, and the development of her manufactures by which she had already pushed us out of Persia and might do so out of other markets. Gladly he testified to the peaceful desires of the present Czar. All was working for peace, and would give two or three years respite to Turkey. Was it to be supposed that the Sultan himself did not wish to get to the end of all these troubles? It would be absurd to suppose that he did not wish to lead a quiet life. Of course, he was anxious to reconcile himself to Europe, and above all to England. The time was favourable for the settlement of financial and other difficulties if only Turkey were treated with common honesty. The 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin, which dealt with the obligations of Turkey, was frequently mentioned in discussions on the Eastern Question. But there was never any allusion to the Articles dealing with the obligations of the European Powers towards Turkey in the matter of the Bulgarian tribute, which Articles had been consistently violated. Again and again had Turkey appealed to England, as one of the Powers under that Treaty, to fulfil her obligation in regard to the Bulgarian tribute, and the Bulgarian, Montenegrin, and Servian share of the Debt, and again and again had Turkey been disappointed. The result was that Turkey was liable for the whole of the tribute, and two millions of money was due to the Sultan for the Bulgarian tribute alone, and withheld from him by the Powers. He mentioned that as one instance of the want of fairness and honesty on the part of the Powers in dealing with Turkey. He would say in conclusion, if the Government were animated by a spirit of vengeance towards Turkey and by a desire to punish the Sultan and destroy him and his Government, they would fail, and would do no good to the Armenians. But if they were animated by an honest desire to effect reforms in Turkey, they had only to choose the proper instruments and take the proper means to succeed.

*Mr. J. COMPTON RICKETT (Scarborough) called attention to that part of the Queen's Speech which referred to the advance into the Soudan. He admitted that the military operations of the British and Egyptian troops in that province deserved the credit due to a well-considered campaign, but thought the House should take into account the value of the conquest of Dongola. A province in the Soudan added to Egypt was either of advantage to that country or to England. The Government had repeatedly affirmed that our occupation of Egypt was only a temporary one, and therefore the military proceedings to the South, involving probably a further advance during the present year, only delayed the evacuation, and could be of no permanent benefit to this country. He presumed that there was not a bimetallic theory of morals—one code of honour for an individual and another for a nation. The recovery of the Soudan exchanged a defensible frontier behind a stretch of desert for a frontier further to the south, involving the control of a sparsely populated and unprofitable district threatened by turbulent and fanatical tribes. It might, however, be argued that although we intended to fulfil our honourable obligation, there were signs of the approaching dissolution of the Turkish Empire, and a delay would enable this country to negotiate with other Powers for a permanent position in Egypt—a position given to us in exchange for concessions in other directions. It was therefore desirable to consider whether Egypt in itself was of any real value to England. Of course, the Suez Canal was the only argument for our occupation. But what would happen in case of war? We should immediately close the Mediterranean with a supporting squadron at Gibraltar, close the Red Sea with another squadron at Aden, divert our mercantile marine round the Cape to India, and send our mobile fleet into the Mediterranean to fight it out with our antagonists. We should never think of detaching an escort to guard fleets of merchantmen through the Suez Canal—a passage liable to be interrupted or blown up at short notice. If we were to lose control of the Mediterranean for, say two months, our army in Egypt would be practically at the mercy of a great military power—caught like rats in a trap. England would reverse the policy of the last 100 years, and become once again a continental Power by the military defence of Egypt. A Russo-Turkish army advancing from Syria would only have a little over 200 miles of rough country to traverse before reaching striking distance. That army would not wander 40 years in the wilderness. The fleet would be quite unable to defend a ditch without the support of a considerable land force. We should be detaching fifty to a hundred thousand men from our limited military resources in order to make the attempt to maintain our position. The probability is that we should evacuate Egypt in a hurry at the outbreak of war instead of entering into a convention, as we might do at the present time, with some consideration in return for our withdrawal. To abandon Egypt precipitately as a military precaution was the true policy of scuttle. If we were the victors in a naval war in the Mediterranean the Suez Canal would fall to us naturally as the spoil at the close of the war. In addition to the fact that we had difficulties with two great Powers in consequence of our continued occupation, we had paralysed our efforts on behalf of Armenia by the suspicion aroused through the Egyptian position. Europe doubted our sincerity, and would not allow us to become its executive at Constantinople. The delivery of a scattered population from tyrants of their own faith was a poor exchange for the sufferings of our fellow-Christians in Armenia. It was probable also that a demand for an increase in the military estimates would be supported by the requirements of our advance in the Soudan. An increase in the naval estimates was a very different matter, for the navy was a defensive and not an aggressive arm. To establish colonial forces and militia defence was one thing, but to increase the regular army for the purpose of expeditions like the present would be a matter no doubt to be resisted on his side of the House. The consolidation of our Colonial Empire offered surely sufficient scope for our energies without such a doubtful enterprise as that already undertaken and proposed to be further developed. ["Hear, hear!"]

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said he wished to point out to the Government, in reference to those paragraphs in the Address saying that they would do this and that if time permitted, that the matter was entirely in their own hands. They had only to support the proposal for limiting the duration of speeches, and they could manage the business of the House at such a rate as they chose. He had only been in the House for twelve years, and it was not for him, a mere child in these matters, to alter the procedure of the House which had endured for centuries, and he would not have attempted to do so, but that this time last year hon. Members accepted the principle of a Bill which he and his hon. Friends introduced at one of its stages by a majority of 70 votes. Few Members would deny that some change of procedure on the subject was necessary. Of course, it would be said that the procedure of the House had not been altered for four hundred years, and that there was no conceivable reason why that which was good enough for preceding generations should not be good enough for this. But other times brought other manners. Sixty years ago—when Mr. Gladstone was elected for Newark—not more than 100 of the 650 Members ever spoke at all. The other Members were content to keep their seats, waiting for their apotheosis—until they were translated to the House of Lords. That was not absolutely the case now. Formerly an hon. Member got his seat because he was able to pay for it; and when elected he was not supposed to address his constituents through the medium of the Reporters' Gallery. That was not precisely the case now, and, therefore, the analogy of sixty years ago did not apply. In every business assembly in this country, whether it was a meeting of Colonels, or a Convocation of Archbishops and Bishops, a time limit obtained, and as the House was the business assembly of the country he could not conceive why such a limit should not be adopted. He and his Friends did not propose to introduce a Bill this Session. They hoped to get an opportunity to proceed by Resolution; and if they succeeded he would expect both front Benches to be as good as their word, and support such a Resolution. He could assure them that if they did so they would ingratiate themselves very much more with the country than by bringing in half-a-dozen Elementary Education Bills.

*MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) expressed disappointment at the comparatively scanty attention which Scotland would receive from the Government during the present Session. It was well known that in the House of Commons, while there was a very large Conservative majority of the whole House, there was not a Conservative majority returned from Scotland, and therefore Scotch Members did not expect to have from the present Government any legislation of a contentious character, but they might fairly expect useful legislation that was not contentious. In regard to the Public Health (Scotland) Bill of which notice had been given, he pointed out that this measure was of a very detailed character, and that the important discussion would be on the Committee stage. The only way for any progress to be made with it, therefore, would be for the Government to appoint a Committee on which all Scotch Members would be represented, after the Second Reading had been obtained. The Bill to supplement the Local Government Act for Scotland was also of a very detailed character, and might properly be introduced. The other point on which he wished to touch was the position which agriculture occupied in the Government Programme. Was it going forward or back? It was within the recollection of all that before the present Government came into power session after session an Amendment to the Address was brought forward by hon. Gentlemen opposite deploring the fact that no remedy was proposed for the disastrous condition of agriculture. Last year, on the first night of the Session, the President of the Board of Agriculture gave notice of his intention to ask leave to introduce a Bill to deal with the question of Agricultural Holdings in Great Britain. What was the position of that Bill now? They had to search for it in the last clause of the Queen's Speech—in the omnibus clause, in which were included those Bills which would be introduced only if opportunity served. Even in that clause the Agricultural Holdings Bill stood fourth or fifth, and therefore he would ask what possible chance such a measure, which raised important and controversial questions, had of passing this session? What had the present Government done for agriculture? From his own country and from England they had excluded Canadian cattle for ever and ever, and they had passed an Act for the relief of agricultural rates which was entirely in favour of the landlords. Now that it came to the turn of the tenants to be benefited they were to be sent empty away. The interest of the tenants was centered in the question of compensation for tenants' improvements. There was an absolute unanimity of opinion among the tenants of England and Scotland on this question. They were of opinion that the present state of law on the subject of compensation for tenants' improvements was most unsatisfactory and urgently needed reform. And yet the Bill dealing with the subject was placed in such a position in the programme as to show that the Government had no intention of really pushing the Bill forward this Session.

ZANZIBAR.

*MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) begged to move the adjournment of the Debate, as he had an important Amendment to move. (*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Go on!") Then he would withdraw that Motion, and would proceed to move the Amendment to the Address which he had placed upon the Table. The Amendment he moved was to add at the end of the Address the following words:—

> "And we humbly express our regret that, having regard to the repeated and definite declarations made by your Majesty's advisers that the legal status of slavery in the Zanzibar Protectorate should be terminated, no statement appears in your Majesty's Gracious Speech that slavery has ceased to exist in that Protectorate."

It would be in the recollection of the House that in March 1895 he had moved a reduction in the salary of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with the view of raising the question of slavery in the Protectorate. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies had stated that it was quite time that slavery in the Protectorate should come to an end. Two years had since elapsed, or to be more accurate a year and ten months, and yet they had no knowledge that slavery had ceased to exist there. It would also be in the recollection of the House that in August 1895 the present Government had declared that they intended to adhere to the pledge given by their predecessors in this matter, and to put an end to slavery in the Protectorate. Last March the definite pledge had been given on behalf of the Government that immediately Mr. Hardinge returned in the autumn slavery would be immediately abolished, and upon that understanding he had withdrawn his Motion on the subject. He would not attribute to the Government any breach of faith, if the emancipation had merely been postponed from the autumn to the present moment, but a serious breach of faith would have occurred if the abolition was not now to be complete. He should be quite satisfied if the Government would state that Mr. Hardinge, who had lately returned to Zanzibar, had received full instructions to take steps to carry out the immediate abolition of slavery in the Protectorate. The question was, Was Mr. Hardinge going back with definite instructions to carry out the immediate abolition of slavery throughout the Zanzibar Protectorate? He did not ask the Under Secretary to detail these instructions, because he quite appreciated the position that Mr. Hardinge had not yet reached Zanzibar on his return journey, but what the House ought to be assured of was, that there was going to be no attempt to introduce an apprenticeship system in these islands, but that the immediate abolition of slavery was about to take place. Since Parliament had been dissolved certain Government Dispatches had been published which appeared in Africa, No. 7, 1896. The character of the Dispatches gave the impression that those published had been specially selected with a view to support a gradual process of abolition. He would give an illustration: Dispatches were published from certain missionaries, some of whom even admitted they had not studied the question, which favoured some gradual method of manumission, whilst the views of Bishop Tucker, Archdeacon Jones-Bateman, and many other missionaries, whose views were in favour of immediate emancipation, had been entirely suppressed. And it appeared special weight seemed to have been attached to any views tending in the direction of delay in the abolition of slavery. The right hon. Gentleman, in speaking to the deputation which waited upon him at the Foreign Office in November last on this question, stated that Mr. Hardinge would "very likely" go back with instructions. The House was ignorant as to whether instructions had or had not been given; if they had not been given he would hold the Government had been guilty of a breach of faith with the House. The right hon. Member further alluded to the Mahommedans not being prepared for immediate abolition. He was afraid the Government had been considering the views of the Mahommedan population rather than the condition of the slaves, but in the circumstances the Government ought rather to look to the abolition of slavery than to the interests of the Mahommedans. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in addressing the deputation to which he had referred, stated that the apprenticeship system had run out its course after the Debates in that House in 1838, in the West Indian Settlements. He believed that was not so. In only one case did the apprenticeship system run out its course, and the local legislatures in every case came to the conclusion that it was expedient to terminate the apprenticeship system, as its evils had been so pronounced and were so obvious to everyone in the Colonies as well as in this country. Again, the right hon. Gentleman stated that there was no cruelty perpetrated upon these islands, and that, therefore, there was no analogy between the apprenticeship system in the Zanzibar Protectorate and the apprenticeship system which existed in the West Indian colonies. But Mr. Sullivan, the representative of Her Majesty's Government in the island of Pemba, writing only last May, in a

Dispatch published last autumn, indicated that there was considerable cruelty at times in the island. Mr. Sullivan stated in a Dispatch which appeared in Africa, No. 7, which was written as recently at last May, that the life of a plantation slave in Pemba was a hard one at best. The Arab was a stern and exacting taskmaster, often a cruel one. Beyond allotting the slave land on which to build a hut, and sufficient food to keep him alive, he gave himself no concern about the welfare of his chattel. In the punishment of their slaves the Arabs showed little mercy. For offences of a trivial nature savage floggings were administered, and for running away the wretched slaves were treated with the most ruthless severity, and in some instances were subjected to the most barbarous cruelties. Mr. Sullivan instanced a monstrous case of cruelty where a slave had for six months been tethered by iron chains, which had eaten into the bones and flesh of the poor creature's ankles, and that he had been fed by one cocoa-nut a day. This was what occurred on an island which we protected, and the instance was only discovered by Mr. Sullivan in going his rounds. Cruelty had existed and did exist wherever there was plantation slavery, and it was idle for the Government to pretend that slavery could continue in either the apprenticeship form or any other form without being accompanied by some amount of cruelty. We had in Zanzibar practical control over the country. In 1890 executive power was given to this country to deal with any question concerning the Zanzibar Protectorate with all Foreign Powers, and in 1891 Sir Gerald Portal appointed English officials over every Government department within the Zanzibar Protectorate. The very fact that all recent Sultans had been appointed by us, and that the other day the Government deposed one Sultan and put another in his place, showed that we had absolute control over the islands, and it was idle for the Government to try to escape abolishing slavery there on the mere technical quibble that Zanzibar was only a protected State. It would have been very easy for the Government to have approached the new Sultan on the subject, and made it a condition of his appointment that all slaves within his Sultanate should be freed forthwith, and he did not understand why this had not been done. On the mainland in this same Protectorate the condition of things, if somewhat different, were if anything worse. There was not even a Sultan to stand in the way as a buffer. The Foreign Office itself ruled over the district, and there, they were given to understand by the speech of the Under Secretary delivered at the Foreign Office last November, the Government had been contemplating a system of apprenticeship rather than total abolition. There, where our control was direct and absolute, the disgrace must be patent to all. At the Foreign Office the Under Secretary had referred to the case of India as being no precedent; it was admitted no two countries were absolutely alike, yet slavery had not only been abolished there, but in the Protectorates of Cyprus, Gold Coast, and Malay, by a thorough and complete measure. With regard to the fear of disturbance following abolition, it was a very curious fact that in the island of Madagascar the very same evils were anticipated as were now contemplated at Zanzibar, yet a million slaves had been recently liberated there, and there had been no disturbance whatever; and he would further point out that when, in 1858, 8,000 slaves belonging to Indian subjects had been liberated on these very islands, no disturbance occurred, and he did not see why any disturbance should be likely to occur now. If there were any danger of it, there was an ample force on the spot to maintain law and order until the island settled down; or troops, if they were required, could easily be temporarily introduced from India or elsewhere, or the bluejackets landed from the vessels of war stationed in those waters. Sir

John Kirk, Sir Gerald Portal, Consul Smith and others well acquainted with the facts, had all advocated immediate abolition, and the Government ought to consider their evidence, for no one spoke with greater authority than Sir John Kirk after his 20 years' residence in that district,rather than that of Mr. Hardinge and Sir Lloyd Matthews, who advocated the continuation of the *status quo*. He did not believe there would be any difficulty about keeping the slaves in the plantations. If proper precautions were taken they could be induced to remain wherever they had been employed by kind masters, and only those who had been employed by cruel masters, and therefore desired to run away, would have to be looked after. There was certainly no prospect of ruin falling upon these islands if the step he advocated was taken. For 23 years the owners had had notice that England intended to abolish slavery. Speaking of the qualities of the soil of the island of Pemba, Dr. Sullivan said that its possibilities were positively boundless. It was of amazing fertility. The sun's rays, acting upon the rich, moist, soil stimulates all kinds of vegetation to an extraordinary degree, and the island was, in fact, a vast forcing house and would alone serve as a granary for the whole of East Africa. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham said two years ago that it was not a question of money, and that the House would willingly vote the money required if only slavery were immediately abolished. He himself did not believe that compensation was necessary if slavery were abolished. Every slave imported into Zanzibar since 1873 had been illegally admitted contrary to treaty, and no man had a right to a single one of these slaves. Those recently born were also legally free, but, inasmuch as few births occurred on the plantations, and the average life of the slave did not exceed from 9 to 14 years, few, if any, could be now said to be even legally held in bondage. The slave estates were mortgaged to the utmost, and the money paid over to the Arabs would ultimately find its way into the pockets of British Indian subjects, whose claim for compensation in respect of slaves should not be indirectly acknowledged. All recent precedents, too, were against compensation. No compensation had been paid in Cyprus, the Gold Coast, and elsewhere where slaves had been freed, and in the West Indian Colonies compensation had proved to have been a huge mistake. If compensation were admitted at Zanzibar it would create a precedent for the whole of East, West, and Equatorial Africa, and wherever domestic slavery existed, and would establish a vested interest, which it would be almost impossible to cope with in the future, and he besought the Government not to entertain any proposal to pay any compensation to the nominal owners of slaves in this British Protectorate. He would have preferred to have raised this subject when Mr. Hardinge was back in Zanzibar. But those interested in the matter wanted to strike the iron while it was hot. They feared that Mr. Hardinge had not full instructions. The Government could telegraph to Zanzibar the intention of the Government, so that slavery should be immediately abolished. He hoped the House would speak with no uncertain sound on the subject, and that the Government would understand that the people of this country and the Members in that House who represented the people were determined that the foul stain of slavery should no longer exist under the British flag. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield), who seconded the Amendment, said that when the subject was debated last March, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs was understood to say that when Mr. Hardinge came to this country in June he should return in the autumn with clear and strict instructions from the Government that the legal *status* of slavery under the British Protectorate should be abolished. They wanted to know whether the Government had kept faith with the House in this matter. If the Government were able to tell the House that Mr. Hardinge had received the instructions he had indicated he would advise his hon. Friend to withdraw his Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. CURZON hoped that within the limits of a very few sentences he should be able to satisfy the hon. Members who had brought this Question forward. He, therefore, should not follow the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment into some of the questions which he had raised, and to discuss which there might be an opportunity later on. The Government had arrived at a decision of policy, and that decision was in strict fulfilment of the engagements which he had entered into more than once in that House. The pledge which had been given was that Mr. Hardinge would receive instructions to abolish the legal *status* of slavery in the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba. Those instructions had been communicated to Mr. Hardinge, who was now on the high seas, and would not arrive at Zanzibar until the end of this month, when he would put himself into communication with the Sultan of Zanzibar, and would discuss with him certain details which the Government had been unable to settle over here. In those circumstances it was not desirable that he should make an ampler statement at the present moment. It was essential that our representative should be on the spot to discuss with the Sultan the points of detail to which he had alluded. It would not be wise for him to make a fuller announcement, which would be subject to the inaccuracies of telegraphic communication, and it might be some time before he would be in a position to state to the House the various steps of the proceedings. That there would be a complete fulfilment of the pledges which he had given the House might rest assured.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked whether the abolition of the state of slavery was to be immediate, in accordance with the pledges given by the right hon. Gentleman some time ago, or whether it was to be gradually effected under some system of apprenticeship. If the right hon. Gentleman could assure the House that the abolition would be immediate or would take place within a very limited time, his hon. Friends, he thought, might rest satisfied. If the Government were really going to abolish the *status* of slavery that policy would cause great satisfaction throughout the country.

Mr. CURZON said that the point about which the hon. Member desired information was just one of those matters of detail as to which he could give no information to the House whilst Mr. Hardinge was absent from Zanzibar.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) moved the adjournment of the Debate.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) hoped the hon. Member would at any rate begin the speech which he intended to deliver.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN said that he should prefer not to do so at that hour. He intended to draw attention to the important subject of amnesty. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN intimated that if it was the wish of any section of the House to adjourn, he should not oppose the Motion.

Debate adjourned till to-morrow.

EAST INDIA (SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCE).

Return presented,—relative thereto [Address 19th January 1827; *Secretary Lord George Hamilton*; to lie upon the Table.

Adjourned at a Quarter before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 20th January 1897.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1).

Bill to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, under The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, relating to the urban sanitary district of Kilkenny and the rural sanitary district of Scariff, ordered to be brought in by the Attorney General for Ireland; presented, and read the first time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.—[Bill 1.]

LONDON (BOROUGH ROAD, SOUTHWARK) PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, under The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, relating to lands in the parish of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings; presented, and read the first time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.—[Bill 2.]

LONDON (CHURCHWAY, ST. PANCRAS) PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for improving an area situated in the parish of St. Pancras, in the county of London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings; presented, and read the first time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.—[Bill 3.]

NEW WRITS.

For County of Essex (Walthamstow Division) *v.* Edmund Widdrington Byrne, esquire, Q.C., one of the Justices of the High Court.

For County of Essex (Southern or Romford Division) *v.* Alfred Money Wigram, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

LORD PENRHYN'S QUARRIES (CORRESPONDENCE).

Copy ordered of all correspondence between the Board of Trade, Lord Penrhyn, and the workmen employed at his Slate Quarries at Bethesda, near Bangor, relating to the Labour Dispute which has arisen at such Slate Quarries.—(*Sir George Osborne Morgan.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (BALLOT FOR BILLS AND NOTICES OF MOTION).

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) moved:

> "That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the Ballot, and that all Members who desire to Ballot, whether for Bills or Motions, for the first four Tuesdays of the Session, do hand in their names at the Table during the Sitting of the House on the first or second day of the Session, and that a Copy of such Notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on the third day of the Session.
>
> "That the Ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day of the Session at a convenient time and place to be appointed by Mr. Speaker.
>
> "That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) suggested that Members should be allowed to ballot for both Bills and Motions instead of being compelled to make their election between them as was the case under the present Rules of the House. He also recommended that the present form of taking the First Readings of Bills should be abolished.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) supported the suggestions of the hon. Member for Louth. If a separate ballot paper were now placed upon the Table everybody would be satisfied.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said that he did not think that the course proposed by the hon. Member who had just sat down could be followed. He would, however, consult the officials of the House with regard to the suggestions of the hon. Member for Louth. Those suggestions would involve the abolition of the customary procedure of the House for many generations, and could not be accepted without consideration. In view of the fact that these suggestions had been made, he would not ask the House to make the present Motion a Standing Order, but would reserve the whole subject for consideration in another year. ["Hear, hear!"]

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Words "That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House" struck out.

Ordered—

"That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the Ballot, and that all Members who desire to Ballot, whether for Bills or Motions, for the first four Tuesdays of the Session, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the Session, and that a Copy of such Notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on the third day of the Session.

"That the Ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day of the Session at a convenient time and place to be appointed by Mr. Speaker."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE—SECOND DAY.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Questions [19th January], "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Viscount Folkestone.*)

Question again proposed:—Debate resumed.

TREASON-FELONY PRISONERS.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) proposed at the end of the Question, to add the words:—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the time has come when the cases of all prisoners convicted under the Treason Felony Act who are, and have been for many years, undergoing punishment for offences arising out of insurrectionary movements connected with Ireland, may be advantageously reconsidered."

The hon. Member said that the Amendment was in the form of the one which had been drawn up by the late Mr. Parnell, and which had been unanimously supported by his colleagues at the time he moved it. These prisoners were convicted of political offences only and ought to have been amnestied long ago. The fact that this subject had been brought so frequently before the House increased the difficulty he had in moving the Amendment, because he could not hope to exhibit the eloquence and force which the hon. Member for Waterford had done in introducing a similar Motion last year. The result of the efforts that had been made to obtain the release of these unfortunate men had not been satisfactory to the Irish people. It was true that the number of these prisoners had been reduced from 25 to five, but those who had already been released were dealt with solely on the ground that their health had suffered from their long imprisonment, and that in the event of their longer confinement they would either die, or become insane. He should doubtless be informed that the Home Secretary had recent official reports with regard to the cases of the men who were still in confinement, and that those reports showed that they were in good health; but the right hon. Gentleman's experience ought to have taught him the danger of relying too far upon such official reports. He therefore begged the right hon. Gentleman to make special inquiry into the cases of the five prisoners. Our whole prison system ought to be thoroughly investigated, unless we were prepared to admit that our prisons were established not for the purpose of correcting our prisoners and of reforming them, but of killing them or driving them mad. ["Hear, hear!"] No doubt the right hon. Gentleman had shown last Session that he desired to act in a humane way, but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman should proceed further upon the lines he then laid down. There were no two opinions on this question in Ireland, and the release of these men had been demanded by meetings of the Irish people, by corporations and boards of guardians, all over the country. The Lord Mayor of Dublin had twice presented petitions at the Bar of that House, and unless these men were released it would appear that no regard was paid to the unanimous desire of the Irish people. ["Hear, hear!"] He would not try to prove that those prisoners were political offenders, because that was now practically admitted, but he could not refrain from reminding the House of the fact that while these men were arrested and charged with offences under the Explosives Act they were tried for treason felony, and that for offences under the Explosives Act the *maximum* penalty was ten years' imprisonment. The admission was squeezed out of the late Home Secretary that it would be reasonable to treat life sentences as sentences of 20 years' imprisonment. Taking that to be generally admitted, the men for whom he pleaded would be entitled to release within a year; but even another year's incarceration might be too much for them. They might be driven to death or to a lunatic asylum before the expiration of another 12 months. He did not think the security of the Empire would be in the least endangered—[*cheers*]—if the Government made up their minds at once that these four helpless wretches should now be restored to their families. Irish Members were amongst the foremost to claim that Dr. Jameson and his colleagues should be treated as political offenders; and he hoped the same spirit would be shown by Members of all sections of the House when the question was not one of being caught in arms against a friendly corps, but one dealing with Irishmen who had already spent 13 years in gaol, and who were certainly not actuated in what they did, or were alleged to have done, by any personal or selfish motives. The Walsall prisoners were properly tried under the Explosives Act, and were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from ten to three years. Every one of them had now been released. He reminded the House that England was the only country which for years had never thought of granting amnesty to political offenders, and suggested that the release of the few remaining political prisoners would be one fitting commemoration of the attainment by Her Majesty of her 60th year of reign. He appealed to the Home Secretary not to let anything deter him from pursuing the humane course he seemed to adopt when he came into office.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) seconded the Motion, and said that those who associated themselves with the amnesty movement did not do so because they had any sympathy with what was called the dynamite policy. They did not, like the hon. Member for Salford, in whose name an Amendment to the Address appeared upon the Paper, treat these prisoners as dynamitards but as political prisoners and as men, who, whatever their offences might have been, had long since expiated their misdeeds, and who, therefore, ought to be released. The prisoners were stamped as political offenders from the very first, because the then Attorney-General, Sir Henry James, speaking at the Warwick Assizes, said:

> "the jury had a serious duty to discharge because the prisoners were charged with the crime of treason . . . they were indicted under a Statute passed in 1848, and the charge was known in legal language as treason-felony."

The Judge recognised the prisoners as political offenders, and the sentences stamped them as such. Mercy had long since cried out for amnesty for these men, and Justice now demanded it. No lives were lost through the action of the men; indeed it was only fair to suppose that in what they did they were not actuated by any desire that human life should be sacrificed. Further, they demanded the favourable consideration of the cases of those men, because they held that the trials of the men were not fair. They did not mean to imply that there was any palpable or intentional unfairness committed, but unquestionably the men were tried at a time when panic existed, and when it was not unnatural that both the judge and jury might be biassed against them. Then they urged that the sentences were brutally severe—penal servitude for life for offences through which no life was lost. He questioned whether an instance of similar severity could be found in the criminal records of any other civilised country. He had no wish to institute any unfair comparison, but he felt bound to lay stress on the different way in which Dr. Jameson and his men were treated by President Kruger, and the manner in which the Irishmen in question were treated in England. In the former case the men actually rose in arms against a neighbouring friendly State, violently attacked that State without authority, and life was sacrificed in that attack. Being taken in arms it was fully within the power of the Boer Government, according to the principles of international law, to have shot those men on the spot. But that course was not taken; the men were surrendered to their own Government, and they were tried and convicted, but they were now all free. Among the very first who signed the appeal that Dr. Jameson and his officers should be treated as first-class misdemeanants were Irishmen. ["Hear, hear!"] In the case of the Irish prisoners, however, no lives were lost, yet they were sentenced to penal servitude for life, and had already served nearly 14 years in prison. On the ground of contrast alone between those two instances he would ask hon. Members opposite to regard the Amendment with kindly consideration. There was a strong and unanimous feeling in Ireland in favour of the proposed amnesty. In this regard it was worthy of observation that the Irish people, notwithstanding the intense interest they took in the land question as one affecting their means of existence, showed that they felt a deeper and warmer interest in this amnesty question than in any other that affected them, and this fact he was very anxious to press on the attention of the Home Secretary. Was it conceivable that if an equally strong feeling existed in England with respect to certain prisoners, that the Home Secretary would not be influenced by it? Irishmen of all classes, without distinction of party or creed, had associated together in public meetings, and in public bodies, in support of the amnesty movement, and he maintained that no Government were justified in ignoring the unanimous appeal of a nation in such a matter. Not a little interest, either, was felt in this matter abroad. In proof of it he might mention this significant fact—that last year the Legislative Council of Cape Colony passed a resolution calling on the Government of the Colony to approach the Imperial Government with a request that they would extend to the Irish political prisoners similar clemency to that extended by President Kruger to the Transvaal raiders. That resolution was sent home, but no information had been given as to the answer sent, although the Colonial Secretary was questioned about the matter at the time. Finally, they asked for the favourable consideration of the cases of the prisoners on the grounds of mercy and justice, on the grounds that the men were political prisoners, and on the ground that they had already suffered terribly and sufficiently for the offences they committed. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. GEORGE MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid), in supporting the Amendment, said there was no matter in which the whole Irish people felt so deep and sympathetic an interest as in this amnesty proposal. While he disclaimed any desire to make light of the crimes for which the men were convicted, yet, under the circumstances, seeing that no life was lost by the offences of the men, and that they had already endured between 13 and 14 years of awful punishment, he thought no good or useful purpose could be served by keeping the prisoners longer in prison; for the Government might be assured that this matter was really felt as a cankering sore among the people of Ireland, and would remain so, preventing all efforts at reconciliation as long as the men were kept in prison. Moreover, the Irish people were deeply affected by the conviction—he feared it was not altogether unfounded—that the treatment of prisoners in the English convict prisons was seriously wanting in humane consideration, and circumstances had led to that impression being entertained abroad. But however that might be—though it was a matter to which severe attention ought to be given by the Government—the whole Irish nation, at home and abroad, were in favour of the amnesty, and surely their request was entitled to respectful consideration at least. The Irish Members and people thought that, even though the crimes committed by the men were heinous and were to be deprecated, yet that the time had come for a favourable consideration of their case. And, indeed, as had been said, no time for doing so could be more opportune than now, when Her Majesty had entered on the 60th year of her reign; the act of clemency at present would be especially a gracious act on the part of the Government, and would be a more forcible means than any other of convincing the Irish people that, after all, there was not always a disposition on the part of the Government to turn a deaf ear to their demands through the voice of their representatives. He maintained that on all grounds the demand made was a reasonable one, to which no man of humane feeling could object. He felt confident that if the Government opened the prison doors to the men they would run no risk by doing so of opposition or of rebellion among their own supporters, for, on grounds of humanity, he was sure there were many hon. Members opposite, and a large number of people in Great Britain, who thought the time had come when clemency might reasonably be exercised. There were already too many disturbing elements between the two countries. If this one, the greatest, was removed, it would do much to soften the others, and show that the English people and Government had a real sympathy with the Irish people. It was the general desire of the people throughout all parts of the country that this matter should be settled, and that the release of the men should remove a serious cause of grievance. He hoped the Home Secretary would continue his investigations, and would come to the conclusion that the ends of justice had been amply met by the sentences which the men had already served.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said he desired to avoid going into the merits of the case which had been debated in that House for several years in succession. He desired to call attention to an incident which had occurred that day, and which threw some light, according to their mind, upon the circumstances under which these men were convicted 13 or 14 years ago. The House was aware that within the last three or four months the country had been excited with a story of a fresh dynamite conspiracy. Three arrests were made in connection with the alleged revival of the dynamite conspiracy—two in a foreign country, from which the men could not be extradited, and one in Great Britain. The man arrested in Great Britain was put on his trial in London the day before yesterday. That morning the case against Bell or Ivory had been abandoned, and he was now an absolutely free man. He had not read the report of the proceedings, but he had not much hesitation in guessing why the case was abandoned after it had proceeded so far. At the preliminary investigation the most important witness for the Crown was an informer, a certain spy, who was brought over from America, and whose career presented a very strong resemblance to that still more famous spy Major Le Caron. He had not the least doubt the advisers of the Crown shrank from putting that man into the box, for if that course had been followed he believed evidence would probably have been given which would have proved not the guilt of Bell, but the complicity of certain Government officials in crimes which they had pretended to trace to these accused persons. He could not help saying that to his mind, at all events, this proved, what they had always felt and believed, that the trials of these men 13 or 14 years ago were not only unfair in respect of the circumstances of panic in which they were held, but that they were fatally prejudiced by the means taken by certain Government officials to concoct the case against men whom it was thought desirable to convict. In view of what had taken place that morning he was justified in asking the House to refrain from passing judgment on the question whether, after all, these trials of 13 or 14 years ago were fair. He would ask whether these men had not really been punished enough already. That was the question before the House. Other persons, not Irishmen, had been tried for exactly the same offence, but while one, an Irishman, was sentenced to a life sentence, the other, a foreigner, received only ten years. The only conclusion they could come to was that the difference in race made all the difference in the case. It would require a very great deal of explanation to remove that belief and conviction from the minds of the Irish people. A Member of the House, a supporter of the Government, had put upon the Notice Paper an Amendment practically censuring the Home Secretary for having liberated four of these prisoners within the last few months. He confessed he was astonished at any such Amendment appearing on the Paper. The Home Secretary needed no defence from him in that respect. It was perfectly well known that he had refused to liberate those men on grounds of policy. He had released them on medical grounds, and he thought it savoured rather of inhumanity, of gross cruelty, and of utter disregard for human life to question the exercise of the clemency of the Crown in cases, in two of which within one week or ten days that the men were released one man had to be confined to the asylum and the other man was undoubtedly found to be out of his mind. He pressed the Home Secretary not to be deterred by any such Amendment as that of the hon. Member for Salford. He was not surprised that a Member of the Tory Party, who had taken a strong view on this question—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is anticipating an Amendment which is on the paper.

Mr. CLANCY said he was not going to discuss the question of the Amendment any further. He was only going to point out that he was not surprised that such an Amendment should have been put on the paper after a certain speech of the late Home Secretary, in Scotland. He had invited Gentlemen to put such Amendments on the Paper. If he recollected rightly, the right hon. Gentleman did not in direct and express terms find fault with the Home Secretary for having released these men, but he said: "When I was in office this man Gallagher was perfectly sane." There was another way, to his mind, of censuring the Home Secretary—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the hon. Member that the question before the House is not the propriety of the conduct of the Home Secretary in releasing those who have been released, but as to whether those who are still prisoners should be released.

Mr. CLANCY said he would only press on the Home Secretary the consideration advanced by his hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny, that the right hon. Gentleman should not trust too much to those medical reports sent to the Home Office from time to time. He recalled to the right hon. Gentleman's attention one or two questions and answers which passed in the House a few years ago. On February 3, 1893, his hon. Friend the Member for East Clare (Mr. W. Redmond) put this question to the late Home Secretary:—

> "Whether he had read the statement attributed to Callan, a prisoner lately released, that Dr. Gallagher, a convict in Portland Prison, was insane, and whether the Home Secretary would sanction an independent medical inquiry into Dr. Gallagher's condition?"

Mr. J. J. Clancy.

The late Home Secretary replied:—

> "I have read the statement attributed to Callan. It is totally without foundation in fact. In view of this and similar allegations I have made careful inquiries respecting the mental condition of Gallagher, with the result that I have come to the conclusion that he is perfectly sane. There is no ground in my opinion for an independent medical inquiry."

That was not the only question. He himself asked on August 29, 1893—

> "whether any medical experts had, at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman, examined into the state of mind of Dr. Gallagher, and if so, whether he would state their names and the result."

The Home Secretary replied:—

> "Yes. Gallagher was on the 5th of this month, at my direction, examined by one of our most eminent authorities in mental disease, Dr. Hack Tuke. The result of Dr. Tuke's examination was entirely in accordance with the Reports previously made to me by the medical officers of the prison. All agree that the convict exhibits no symptoms of mental unsoundness."

Yet in the face of these answers was the fact that in August last the present Home Secretary felt obliged, on the basis of a medical report that Dr. Gallagher was either mad or verging towards madness, to order the release of the prisoner, and after his release it was necessary to confine him to an asylum. ["Hear, hear!"] Then he asked the Home Secretary whether he ought to place so much reliance on medical reports for keeping men in prison until the last moment. Another consideration he urged on the right hon. Gentleman was that the release of the four men had not been followed by any consequences the Government need regret. On the contrary, if that action had been followed by any material consequences, they were such as should gratify the Government. The Irish people applauded the action of the Home Secretary, and he urged the right hon. Gentleman to continue his policy, and to consider the cases of the other men from a humane point of view, and not to be deterred from the exercise of that clemency humanity demanded by any considerations of policy. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.) added his voice in support of this plea, and testified to the strong feeling in Ireland upon this amnesty question. Much was heard from hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the time wasted in the discussion of Irish grievances, but if they would press their friends in office to follow the dictates of humanity in this instance they might remove this grievance, which else must from time to time be raised in the House. Further, such an act of clemency would go a long way to assuage Irish feeling. When last year the Land Act was passed, and this was followed by the release of John Daly and his friends, the bitterness of Irish feeling was assuaged, and the conduct of the Executive contrasted favourably with that of their predecessors in office. It was hoped that this act of clemency would be followed by the release of the remaining prisoners, and the House would be spared these repeated debates. Of course it was felt that the discovery of the alleged plot intervened to tie the hands of the Home Secretary, but now, when the prosecution had broken down, the opportunity offered for the release of the remaining victims. ["Hear, hear!"] A strong refusal now would force on the minds of the Irish people that, in their work of remedying the grievances of Ireland, the Government were not sincere, and that the release of John Daly and his companions was not due to any feeling of clemency, but was simply because medical reports forced the Government to take that course. Having gone so far in this direction, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take this further step and remove this Irish grievance.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) joined his appeal to that of his hon. Friends below the gangway to the Home Secretary to set these men at liberty. Grave doubts had arisen, in minds well qualified to judge, as to whether these persons were guilty, but waiving that, and assuming for the sake of argument that at the time and under the circumstances the sentences were just, he appealed to the Home Secretary to consider how different were circumstances now. Could he say there was anything in the state of Ireland that made it necessary to continue the punishment? Under the changed circumstances, would he not reconsider the matter? It would do much to satisfy the feelings of millions of people here and in Ireland if he would make a respectful reply. He did not wish to speak at length, he only desired that the voices of English Members should not be wanting in this appeal, and they were not wanting when the Liberal Party were in power.

MR. T. M. HEALY considered that Irish Members would fail in their duty if they did not express to the Home Secretary gratitude and satisfaction for the courage and humanity the right hon. Gentleman had shown in releasing the men last year. ["Hear, hear!"] That there was delay was not the fault of the right hon. Gentleman, but the result was appalling. The unfortunate prisoner Whitehead was no sooner released than he took to roaming over the country a raving lunatic. He disappeared for days, hiding in bogs and ditches, and being now sent to America was an inmate of a lunatic asylum. And yet for years appeals were met with the denial that there was anything the matter with this man. He cared not whose fault it was, it was an appalling scandal and discredit to think that these denials came from the Minister who was kept in office by the votes of the Irish Members. ["Hear, hear!"] This was not all. When the present Home Secretary released John Daly and the others he was met with the suggestion that this was done as part of a compact with Irish Members in reference to the Land Act. The First Lord of the Treasury had taken the trouble to deny that, but it was to be regretted that he had done so.

*MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that he should not discuss matters that might arise upon the Amendment given notice of by the hon. Member for Salford.

MR. T. M. HEALY only wished to deny the imputation that it was due to any political compact, it was simply due to the courage, moderation, and humanity of the Home Secretary. ["Hear, hear!"] The question which they must ask themselves was whether the men still in prison were guilty. No one could know better than the late Home Secretary, who was counsel for the Irish members before the Parnell Commission, that a taint of police fraud affected the conviction of every one of these men. In February, 1889, a promise was made that Mr. Robert Anderson would be produced before the Commission to be cross-examined on the question of how these plots were got up. It would be remembered that Le Caron, the police spy, produced before the Commission a whole series of documents which he obtained from Mr. Robert Anderson. It would, he thought, be the duty of the Irish Members this Session to press for a Select Committee to inquire into Mr. Anderson's operations. He had read a few passages from Le Caron's cross-examination by Sir C. Russell:—

> "You have suggested rather than stated in your evidence that you had to do with Gallagher and Lomasney. Did you take part in any deliberation at which either of these wicked plots was devised?—Yes.
>
> "And you advised in them?—I did not deem myself of sufficient importance to make suggestions and put myself too forward in these matters.
>
> "But you appeared to advise and coincide in it?—I offered no objection.
>
> "Then you consented in convention and gave information at once?—Immediately on the first opportunity that presented itself."

The evidence showed that the agents of the Government in America were the *agents provocateurs* in all these cases. Having regard to the proceedings of the police that autumn in Belgium, France and Holland, and to what had occurred that very day at the Old Bailey, and recollecting the promise to produce Mr. Anderson, who was given £10,000 a year for promoting these plots, he thought it was time that an inquiry should be made into the practices of that gentleman.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that the observations of the hon. Member were not pertinent to the Amendment before the House. The hon. Member was not entitled to discuss the general question of the mode of prosecuting criminals in Ireland or elsewhere.

Mr. T. M. HEALY pointed out that the guilt or innocence of the men in prison depended upon the circumstances of their conviction. The system of getting up conspiracies was tainted *ab initio.* A British agent had his nose in every one of these plots in America. They should bear in mind that the agent's importance grew in proportion to the number of the plots which he disclosed.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that the hon. Member was disregarding his ruling, and he must ask him to keep to the question before the House.

Mr. T. M. HEALY reminded the House that the remnant of these prisoners in gaol was small. A letter had been written recently by one of them, which went to show that his constitution had completely broken down. Seeing that every one of these convictions occurred as long ago as 1883, in circumstances entirely different from the present, and that all the principal offenders had been released, surely the time had arrived when the Home Secretary might very fairly take these men's cases into favourable consideration, relying on the general sense of justice of that House and disregarding the attacks of cranks. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. JAMES O'BRIEN (Cork) contended that political prisoners ought to be treated with less severity than ordinary prisoners. In this country, however, they were treated with greater severity, especially if they were Irish. This he knew from his own experience. Special warders were always told off to watch Irish political prisoners—warders who could be depended upon to annoy them and leave them no peace day or night. The men now in gaol had been subjected to such treatment for 13 or 14 years. To have executed them at once would have been more lenient. The raiders into the Transvaal, who had no excuse for their conduct, had only been imprisoned for a few months as first-class misdemeanants. Very different was the vengeful punishment suffered by these unfortunate Irishmen, against whom the only charge that could be made was that they were in possession of explosives. They could not be charged with having taken life or even injured a single person. The real reason why they were still in prison was that they were Irishmen—that was their unpardonable crime.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) reminded the House that when these prisoners were convicted a reign of terror existed in the land. All means of constitutional agitation were forbidden. That was how these men were driven into unconstitutional methods, and the Government of the day were responsible. It ought also to be borne in mind that the agitation of those days was the result of the refusal of the Government to grant reforms of which many had since been effected. If it was not possible to indulge in constitutional agitation in Ireland then these men were driven to use unconstitutional methods. There had been no amnesty with reference to Irish political offenders; there had only been the release of certain prisoners. On what ground? Not on the score of amnesty, but for medical reasons, and because these men were unable to remain longer in prison unless to the danger of their lives and minds. The majority of the men who had been released had been ruined either in health or in mind. He did not believe the denials made from the Treasury Bench, not because Ministers desired to conceal the truth, but because they were merely made the machines whereby the opinions of officials were conveyed to the House and the country. He thanked the Home Secretary for his courtesy and consideration in receiving various bodies that waited on him in connection with this subject, for the way in which he had dealt with the prisoners, and for the courage he had shown throughout notwithstanding the sneers and the scoffs of some of his supporters. He pointed out that Duff was at present in Broadmoor Asylum, and indicated his want of faith in the replies forwarded to the right hon. Gentleman from official sources. The Irish Nationalist Amnesty Association, to which he belonged, had asked the Home Secretary to allow an independent inquiry by medical men to be made into the condition of the prisoners, and he trusted that the result of the Debate would be to allow such an independent inquiry. Amnesty was a law all over the world in constitutional government assemblies, except in this country. No political offenders had ever been confined for such a length of time as the Irish political prisoners, nor had prisoners of the same class elsewhere suffered the same harsh treatment. The percentage of Irish political prisoners who were being done to death in prison, or who had been driven mad, exceeded the percentage of any political prisoners who had been confined in other countries under a constitutional government during the century. This was not a state of things which redounded to the credit of this country or to its ministers. They had been told when this Government came into power that Home Rule was to be killed with kindness. Irishmen had not received much material benefit from the Tory Government up to the present. But there was one thing which would cost the Government nothing—that was to release the political prisoners. The Government would save money on the transaction, and economy had always been the ruling spirit of the British Treasury. It would do more than that. It would satisfy the vast body of Irish Nationalist opinion. There was one platform on which all Irishmen were agreed, and it was that the time had come when the political prisoners ought to be released. He trusted that the appeal which had been made would have an effect on the Home Secretary.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Cork, N.E.) said that he and his hon. Friends were expressing what was undoubtedly the almost unanimous opinion of the people of Ireland, of all political parties of all shades, and of all creeds. That opinion had been expressed from platform after platform, and he thought that as a matter of public policy the time had come when the Government might take into consideration this expression of opinion from united Ireland. He also bore testimony to the courageous action of the Home Secretary. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman had acted not alone with humanity—as he was bound to do on the medical reports—but also with courage in facing what might have been an expression of public opinion on the part of some persons in this country as to the advisability of releasing these men. With this experience before them the Irish members were confident now in making a further appeal to the humanity of the right hon. Gentleman as well as to the question of policy which must affect his Government. It could not be assumed that the Irish people sympathised with the use of dynamite, or with a dynamite policy. Not a man who had been engaged in this agitation had any sympathy with the use of dynamite; and, therefore, when the people of Ireland asked for the release of these men it was because they felt that such an act of clemency would tend to take away the feeling in Ireland that there was in the treatment of political offenders a differential scale. There was not a civilised country in the world which treated its political prisoners as we did. Was this country to learn lessons of clemency from Russia, or from any other country? The whole history of this country showed that Irishmen, who sometimes in the past had adopted methods he did not attempt to justify, had always had meted out to them punishment which they would not have received at the hands of any other country for political offences. He, therefore, appealed to the Government and to the Home Secretary to say whether the time had not come when the wishes of the people of Ireland should be met without in any way interfering with the course of justice.

On the return of MR. SPEAKER after the usual interval,

*MR. FRANCIS O'KEEFFE (Limerick) said that no reply had been given from the Government Benches to the arguments which the Irish Members had brought forward; and any impartial listener to the Debate must believe that their case was irresistible. One of the reasons that impelled him to take part in the Debate was that he was a representative of the City of Limerick. Hon. Gentlemen would probably remember that one of the most significant episodes of the last General Election was the unanimous return of John Daly of that city. Mr. Daly and he were alone nominated for that constituency. He knew that in the eyes of the law Daly was disqualified to sit in the House; but he withdrew in his favour, and Daly was elected. He had never met him before, but since then, from many conversations he had had with him, and from his speeches at public meetings, he was convinced that he, Daly, was innocent of the charges for which he was convicted. What was the use that Daly made of his recovered liberty? Was it to parade his own sufferings to the public, and to appeal for sympathy for himself? No! His first words, when he received a public reception in Dublin that would not be accorded to Royalty, were an appeal on behalf of the prisoners whom he had left behind him in Portland Gaol. He would remind the Home Secretary that it was an elementary proposition of criminal jurisprudence that the object of a punitive sentence was not to punish the individual, but to deter others. Surely it was impossible to contend that after an imprisonment of 15 years the punishment accorded to those men had not the desired deterrent effect. No man in Ireland or England, or in any part of the British Empire, thought that the principles of dynamite would ever be brought into force again. He could assure the House that the very word was abhorred in Ireland. It was believed in Ireland that the dynamite conspiracy had been promoted by Government agents for sinister ends. In any case, these men had expiated the offences of which they had been adjudged guilty, and they were now simply retained in prison as hostages; but the English Government required no hostages, because there was no one going to make reprisals upon them. In fact, the men were retained in prison because they were Irishmen. He could assure the Home Secretary that when the news reached Limerick of the release of Mr. Daly men of the most advanced political views held a meeting, and they unanimously passed a vote of thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for his action in the matter. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would release the remaining prisoners, and thus close for ever a dark chapter in the relations between Ireland and England, so that this year, when the country would be celebrating an event that would be for ever memorable in the history of England, it might be the proud boast of Her Majesty that in the 60th year of her reign not a single Irishman was in prison for a political offence.

*SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee) said that, having consistently voted for every amnesty Resolution proposed since he entered the House, he regretted that the appeals made to the Home Secretary had been left so much in the hands of the Irish Members, because he believed that there was on his side of the House, particularly among Scottish Members, a growing opinion that the time had arrived when the Home Secretary would do well to advise the exercise of the clemency of the Crown to those unfortunate criminals. There were one or two considerations he should like to put before the House in behalf of the prisoners. It was very doubtful whether those men had been aware of the mischief which they were about to commit. At that time the use of explosives had been comparatively rare, and their destructive powers were not so well known as they were now. Again, those unfortunate men were influenced very much by the feeling that there was not sufficient opportunity otherwise for giving that expression to the strong sentiments of their countrymen they thought desirable, and they wished therefore to forcibly attract the attention of the Government to their sense of their wrongs. It had always seemed to him that the United States had at the end of the great Civil War, when hundreds of thousands of lives had been sacrificed, set an example worthy of imitation by all the nations of the world. It should be remembered that in English and in Scotch constituencies there were a number of Irishmen, and of the descendants of Irishmen, who took very strong views in regard to this question of amnesty. They believed that those prisoners had been more heavily punished than Englishmen or Scotchmen would have been had they been found guilty of similar offences. He strongly sympathised with that view. He had in his own constituency upwards of 30,000 Irish people, or the descendants of Irish people, than whom, taken as a whole, there was no more sensible, peaceable, industrious, hard-working, and commendable section of the community. He knew that this large section of his constituency entertained the views in regard to the prisoners to which he had referred, and knowing also that in large cities in England, like Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds, there were also a large number of Irish people having these feelings, he thought it was right that utterance should be given to them in the House, and that the Government would do well to yield to them. He had never attached the least importance to the charge made against the Home Secretary that he had released the other prisoners for political purposes. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had been solely actuated by feelings of humanity, and it was on the grounds of common humanity that he now appealed to him to release the remaining prisoners. The mental and physical condition of the men who had been recently released fully justified the action of the Home Secretary in setting them free, and he would say to the right hon. Gentleman—do not keep the men at present in prison until you have reduced them to the same unhappy condition; act on the humane principle that they have suffered sufficiently already, that the deterrent effect of their punishment has already been obtained, and now advise the clemency of the Crown to be exercised, and liberate those unfortunate men.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I find it somewhat difficult to reply, owing to the wide ground covered by the Debate and the many subjects involved. I certainly agree with one or two of the hon. Members from Ireland, and I am sure they feel it would have been a satisfaction to this House if on the advice of the Government they had been able to remedy any other Irish grievance, if, indeed, they could remedy any Irish grievance. It has been a great source of regret to myself that I have not been able to see my way to recommend the exercise of Her Majesty's prerogative of mercy towards these treason-felony prisoners now in Portland. I am afraid I am not able to give any assurance at the present moment that will be entirely satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am pretty confident from what I have heard from them that they perhaps hardly expect it. But what I wish to say at the outset, if I am permitted to say so much under the orders of the House, is that I do wish to protest against any competition between the humane feeling of myself and my predecessor or any other of my predecessors at the Home Office. In everything in connection with the treatment of the prisoners, whether with regard to the prisoners generally or with what are called the Irish political prisoners—treason-felony prisoners—I have absolutely not deviated in any way whatever, so far as I am aware, from the action of my predecessor, and I entirely endorse the action which he has taken from time to time upon the reports of the best opinion which he could get from the medical authorities with reference to the state of those prisoners. The question of policy, of course, is a different matter, on which I have no right to speak. I am prepared to admit, as I have admitted on former occasions, that those hon. Members from Ireland who have introduced this subject have presented it in a spirit and manner to which no exception can be taken. I admit that they represent the strong opinion which a very great majority of the people of Ireland hold—[*Irish cheers*]—that what they call an amnesty ought to be extended to what are called the political prisoners, and I admit to the fullest extent that there is no desire on the part of anybody I know to impute to them the slightest sympathy with the particular crimes of which these men were convicted. That is granted; but when I am asked to deal with this question as a question of amnesty for political prisoners I must repeat again what has been said by more than one of my predecessors, and what has been said by my colleague the present Leader of the House in the Debate of last year—that, whatever may be the motives which induced crimes of this sort, you must go beyond those motives, and, although you are willing to say that political motives and the notion that they might reform the Constitution of their country may have been to some extent the instigation of these crimes, yet these men were found guilty before a fair tribunal, and properly found guilty, of crimes which are abhorred by the civilised world. ["Hear, hear!"] My predecessors have examined into this question, and I have done my best to examine into it, having seen the Judge, and having taken all those opportunities which are open to me, and I have satisfied myself, as did those before me, that these men were properly convicted. They were sentenced to the punishment they are now undergoing by the same Judge who subsequently tried other persons, to whom allusion has been made, for similar offences. I am bound to say that it is rather late in the day to expect me—indeed I do not think I am expected—to go back upon the correctness or non-correctness of the verdict of those days. I think we must proceed on the assumption that these particular prisoners were found guilty, from whatever motives, political or otherwise, of crimes which are abhorrent to the civilised world—namely, of having in their possession, or being determined to use, explosives which in their effect must under ordinary circumstances have proved to be destructive to human life, though, happily, that was not the result in this case. When I face a problem of that kind I have to go into questions which are beyond the mere question of the humane treatment of our prisoners, or the question as to how far anybody in my position is justified in advising the exercise of the Royal prerogative of mercy. It is not for me to say more except that I appreciate what has been said of my action recently, and I only want to show that the idea is erroneous that there has been the slightest divergence from the uniform practice of the Home Office in this matter. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know how far you will allow me, Sir, to say anything upon what passed last August, and what is passing at the present moment, but I should like to say this much upon the immediate question before the House, that I have not felt that the time has come when Her Majesty ought to be advised to exercise the prerogative of mercy towards these prisoners on the ground of policy. I am not denying that recent sentences and contemporaneous events ought not to be considered, nor am I denying the doctrine which has been urged that the deterrent influence on crime ought to be considered, and that you ought to drop the vengeance side of the matter. I do not believe there is anybody in this House or in this country who desires that the punishment of these men should be charged with the attribute of vengeance. But, at the same time, I do feel that these prisoners, who have been found guilty of crime, whether their motives were political or otherwise, ought to be punished in the severest manner. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know whether I ought to allude to what has been said with reference to a trial which has been taking place, and which is finished this morning. The hon. Member who referred to it drew the inference from it, which I venture to think rather extraordinary, that there was some doubt as to the correctness of the verdict upon those prisoners whose case we are now considering, because, in the course of the trial which was concluded to-day, there has been either an acquittal or a withdrawal of the case. I have not exact information on the subject, but I should have thought that this was an instance of how a trial could be conducted fairly in this country, and if, upon this occasion, with the evidence which was before the Public Prosecutor, and with the guidance of the same Judge and with an English jury, the prisoner was acquitted, surely it is a fair instance of the continuity of English law and justice; and the inference is that 13 or 14 years ago, when these unfortunate men were convicted, they had at least as fair a trial and treatment as the man who has been acquitted to-day. ["Hear, hear!"] I desire to repudiate in the strongest way any allegation that this case, which I am told is concluded to-day, is a got-up case by the police. I assert my most emphatic belief, from information which has reached me, and on my authority as a Minister of the Crown, that the action of the police, whether they have succeeded or not in obtaining a conviction, has been fair throughout towards those concerned. I assert, moreover, that it is my belief that by their speedy action, and by information which they possessed, they prevented—and pretion is better than punishment—a very great disaster in this country. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not think any argument can be drawn from the result of this trial that the evidence was not sufficient to justify a conviction. When I have been appealed to on former occasions with reference to the release of these prisoners upon grounds of policy, I have assented to the carrying out of the policy of the Home Office with reference to long sentences—namely, that when these long sentences have been inflicted for a particular class of crime, and when at a later period that crime has been less rampant or has disappeared in view of the object of those sentences as a deterrent, it was reasonable to take into consideration the earlier sentences. As regards the treason-felony prisoners, I am not indisposed to give weight to those considerations; but, as I have said, I am not prepared at the present moment to advise any further relaxation of the imprisonment of these men other than would occur in the ordinary case of prisoners under ordinary sentences. We are told that they are political offenders, but, without arguing the question, I must repeat that the offences which they committed are such as ought not to be lightly regarded by any civilised community. With reference to the whole of this business I am anxious it should be understood that my action has been absolutely uniform with that of my predecessor. I know the grounds upon which he acted with regard to Gallagher, and I have satisfied myself that he was absolutely right, if I may say so, and had no justification for advising his release on medical grounds, and I think it is only fair to him that I should say so. More, perhaps, I need not state. Hon. Members opposite have dwelt a great deal on the health of the prisoners. I would remind them that what I have really to go upon is, in the first instance, the reports, periodical and specially called for, as to the health of convicts. If I am not satisfied with them I must ask for the further opinion of my chief medical inspector, and if not satisfied with that I can go to a higher authority. But to ask me, or any Home Secretary, to receive the opinion of other medical men than those whom he specially employs, is to ask me to go outside my responsibility as Secretary of State. I repeat that I have simply adopted the uniform practice of the Home Office, that where imprisonment is likely to prove dangerous to health, sanity, or life, a certificate is given to me to that effect, and I think the facts show I have not erred on the side of severity. ["Hear, hear!"] I am asked to consider the health of the remaining six prisoners. I do not think I can do more than I have done. All I can say is I am as anxious as those before me have been, that prisoners under sentence should be so watched that where the imprisonment is likely to endanger health, sanity, or life it should at once become a subject for consideration whether the clemency of the Crown should be exercised. Several hon. Members have spoken of the cases of individual prisoners. Take the case of Wilson. I have taken every means to inform myself of the condition of that man, and I am satisfied from the reports I get—not without cross-examination—that he is not in a dangerous state of health. As regards the future of the few remaining prisoners, certainly it is no wish of mine, and it is not the intention of the law of this country, that there should be such a deterioration in the health of prisoners as should lead to such results as have unfortunately recently occurred.

Though I may not be allowed to go into the case of the four prisoners released, yet perhaps it is only fair to say that if I have been too late in acting in the case of certain prisoners I might have been a little too early in the case of another. That may appear an unkind thing to say, because on being informed, on the best authority I could obtain, that the man was likely to suffer in mind or health by further imprisonment, I felt myself bound to advise the clemency of the Crown.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked when Gallagher's insanity set in.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I do not know whether it would be in order to answer that question after your ruling, Sir, in the course of the Debate. But if I had been permitted to go into the whole case I should have stated that, according to the best information I could obtain, I found when I came into office that there was no cause for the release of Gallagher. I satisfied myself of that in December, 1895, before the commencement of last Session. Then when I was satisfied of Gallagher's condition by the report I received in July, I did not hesitate a single moment in acting. Up to the commencement of last year I was satisfied that my predecessor was absolutely right in what he stated to the House, that there was no justification for believing that Gallagher was in a state which required him to go into a lunatic asylum or that he should be released.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Were the doctors the same in each case?

*Mr. SPEAKER: I have not hitherto interrupted the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the case of the four prisoners released, because a good many observations had been incidentally made about them. I hope, however, the right hon. Gentleman will not further argue their case upon an Amendment which does not really raise it.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I bow at once to your ruling, Sir. But I will merely say that if I could have answered the hon. Member's question my reply would have been very satisfactory. I am thankful to the hon. Member and those who sit beside him for having given me credit for acting from good motives. I do not know that I can properly add anything more. In conclusion I regret extremely that I am unable to give any promise with reference to advising Her Majesty to exercise clemency towards these prisoners. When the proper time comes I shall not be unwilling to consider their case in accordance with the practice of the Home Office, which draws no distinction between Irish and other prisoners. ["Hear, hear!"] I repudiate most strongly the notion that Irish prisoners are treated differently from others. I may appeal almost to certain hon. Members opposite themselves, who have been in English prisons, whether from their heart of hearts, whatever they might think of the prison rules, they can say that Irish prisoners are treated differently. [An Irish Member: "You are mistaken there."] At any rate, I say they are not, and I do not think it can be contradicted. I regret, Sir, I am unable to concede anything in the nature of an amnesty for these Irish prisoners. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said the Irish Nationalists had not endeavoured to minimise the gravity of the crimes of these prisoners. But if they were political crimes they were entitled to the leniency with which political offences were regarded. If their crimes were using or possessing dynamite, the heaviest sentence which the specially-made English law awarded was ten years' penal servitude, and under the rules of the Home Office the sentence would come up for revision after seven years. But because the political element was introduced into the trial, they were sentenced to penal servitude for life, and that being the case, he asked the right hon. Gentleman, how did the practice of the Home Office, which refused to review that long sentence—imposed owing to the special circumstances of the time and for the particular purpose of being a deterrent—agree with the theory he had laid down, that if long sentences were imposed as deterrents they ought to be reconsidered at a time when the danger passed away? If the rule laid down in the Home Office that when a man was sentenced to a term of penal servitude for life it was to be treated as a term of 20 years and not come up for reconsideration for 15 years was a hard and fast rule, how had they got a remedy to meet the case of a judge who, in time of public panic, inflicted a severe sentence as a deterrent? How could they go back upon it again? The right hon. Gentleman refused to recognise this as a political offence. He would only ask him to treat it as one offence or another. If it was a political offence, then the purpose of punishment had been long served, and the Government would be in the position of retaining men for a political offence after they had suffered 13 years' imprisonment, and when every shadow of an excuse for their detention had passed away. On the other hand, if it were to be treated as a dynamite offence against the public peace, the punishment awarded by the statute specially passed for the purpose had long been suffered by these men. However the Government might justify their own action, they could not get it out of the mind of the people of Ireland that these prisoners were still kept in gaol because they belonged to a different nationality, and if there was an Irishman who wished to inflict injury upon or excite racial hatred against England, the Government were keeping up for him a standing argument for his conduct. Was that a wise policy on the part of the Government? Ought not the object of this and of every Government to be to remove every opportunity that could be given to Irishmen of pointing to the different treatment extended by the English Government to Irishmen as compared with people belonging to other countries? There had never been any cessation in their amnesty motions since the Union owing to the refusal of the Government to consider the national demand, and treat the opinion of Irishmen as of some importance. The right hon. Gentleman had entirely misinterpreted the argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Dublin as to the event that had taken place that day. The Irish Members had not questioned, from the commencement of these amnesty motions to the present time, the fair play which had been given either to these men who had been convicted or other Irishmen who had been tried, so far as the trials themselves were concerned. What his hon. Friend the hon. Member for North Dublin was referring to was the fact, which was also connected with this motion here, that what had taken place that day was evidence, and what would have been disclosed in Court would have been evidence, that other crimes of this kind had been incited by agents whose interest it was to keep these unfortunate outrages going for their own purposes. There were men occupying high official positions in Ireland who had stated that any danger to life and limb which they had incurred was owing to the machinations of officials of the Home Office, who had been getting up these conspiracies. That was referred to on former occasions as being connected with the trials at the time, and that was deep in the minds of the Irish people in connection with the demand they made, because they said, if these men were guilty they believed that which the right hon. Gentleman claimed to have done now—namely, prevented outrage taking place, and stopped the commission of crime when it was about to take place—had not been done in the past. In regard to that, there was a change of policy in the attitude of the Government from that which existed at the time these trials took place. There was also a change of policy as to the manner of the trials. Let them suppose those trials had taken place to-day, and that a man was tried for his connection with a dynamite conspiracy. He would not now be tried for treason-felony because the public panic was not sufficient, and the danger to the public peace was not so great as in 1883, when the former trials took place. If, therefore, such a man were to be sentenced now, he would be sentenced to a term at the most of ten years' penal servitude, and the sentence would come up for revision at the end of seven years. In the case of men who were tried in 1883, when severe sentences were inflicted with a deterrent object, now that the danger had passed away, why could not the Government make up their mind to cast aside this hard and fast line of the Home Office binding them to the revision of sentences only after a certain period of time had elapsed? The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the demand from those Benches being supported by the vast majority of opinion in Ireland. There was not a doubt in the mind of any Irish Member that if these prisoners were the prisoners of an Irish Unionist Government in which a single Nationalist had not a seat, they would long ago have been released in obedience to the demands of the Irish people. On no platform in Ireland, whether Unionist or Nationalist, was there a voice raised against the policy of releasing these men. The Dublin Corporation had passed motions in favour of amnesty which had been supported by the Unionist Members of that body. some of whom had appeared at the Bar of that House to support the petition of the Lord Mayor asking for clemency to men who were regarded as political prisoners. Disregarding all the questions of health or mental sanity of the prisoners, was there to be no consideration for the national demand of the Irish people that the few men still remaining in gaol should be released? He asked the right hon. Gentleman seriously to consider whether any public purpose could be served by the further detention of these men, and whether it would not be wiser to draw the two nations closer together by an act of clemency and justice towards prisoners who had already suffered more than they would have done if they had been merely accused of dynamite offences?

Mr. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.) said he would have been reluctant to interfere in the Debate had it not been for the virtual challenge which the Home Secretary threw out in his direction. The right hon. Gentleman repudiated in his own behalf, and in behalf of the Government he represented, the idea that Irish political prisoners were subjected to more severe treatment in penal servitude than ordinary criminals. Unfortunately he had a more intimate knowledge than the right hon. Gentleman of the kind of punishment that was undergone in penal servitude. During his seven years and seven months' imprisonment in Dartmoor, he was considered a fairly well-conducted prisoner. He was scarcely ever brought before the Governor for a breach of prison discipline, but, notwithstanding repeated applications, he was never allowed the privilege, more valued than any other, of receiving a visit from any of his friends. He could add to this many other instances of exceptional severity meted out to him because he was there, not as an ordinary criminal, but as an Irishman convicted of a political crime against the Government. Passing from the personal phase of the question, he had to acknowledge at once that in the tone of the speech of the Home Secretary they had to note that it did not shut the gate of mercy with a clang. The right hon. Gentleman spoke sympathetically, and he believed in his heart that if the right hon. Gentleman could translate his own wish into political action, he would release these four or five men to-morrow. The right hon. Gentleman had been fair enough to acknowledge that there was practical unanimity of sentiment in Ireland on this question, and yet, in the face of arguments which would be overwhelming with any other Government in Europe, he, representing the strongest Ministry for the last 20 years, preferred to follow the hard-hearted example of his predecessors in office rather than the example of the Governments on the Continent of Europe, who had shown that they could extend mercy to their political opponents. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he was satisfied that the conviction of these prisoners was brought about by fair means. That would have been said a few years hence by some other Home Secretary if the man Bell or Ivory had not been fortunate enough to have at his disposal legal advisers, who insisted on the production in Court of the conspirators of the Secret Service. The Government rather than produce these *agents provocateurs*, withdrew the charge and released Bell. The Home Secretary had confidence in his police, and declared that had it not been for the vigilance of the officers, some great disaster would have occurred in September last; but the chief plotters were arrested by a friendly Government, between whom and England an Extradition Treaty existed. That Government expressed its willingness to surrender those chief plotters, but the English Government said they did not want their extradition.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I really must contradict the hon. Member. There was no means of getting these men extradited under the law.

Mr. DAVITT: Did the Government make a demand for their extradition?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Certainly they made a demand; but, finding on closer examination that the offence was not within the Treaty, they admitted that they had no right to press the demand.

MR. DAVITT: Why, then, did not the Government accede to the request of Bell and consent to produce these witnesses at the Old Bailey this morning?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I know nothing about what happened this morning at the Old Bailey. I am not responsible for the conduct of the trial, but I am certain that there was no refusal to produce the evidence of any witness that was forthcoming on behalf of the Government.

MR. DAVITT: Then it is a pity that the Solicitor General, who was in charge of the case, did not remain in the House to explain what has been done.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The whole of this discussion on the case of Bell is foreign to the question before the House. An hon. Member referred to the case of Bell, not for the purpose of arguing the merits of the case, but merely as an illustration. To that there was no objection, and, the matter having been referred to, the Home Secretary thought it right to give an explanation of what was stated by that hon. Member. The question of the prosecution of this man has really nothing to do with the question before the House.

MR. DAVITT said he would not pursue the subject further. This demand was based on two grounds, rather on the ground of humanity than any other. These men had been in penal servitude for thirteen years. That meant that if they had been sentenced to 17 years they would now be entitled to their liberty. Was there a single Government in Europe to-day, either the Government of Russia or even the Government of Turkey, that had in the custody of its prison officials a single political foe who had been in prison during the last 13 or 14 years? Even the Sultan of Turkey compared favourably with the Government of England in the matter of his treatment of political prisoners. He hoped that after the discussion that had taken place the Government would see fit to reconsider their decision before long. This was going to be a memorable year in the history of the country, and was the Government going to permit this auspicious year to go by without showing the world that it was strong enough and generous enough and just enough to liberate the last Irish prisoners?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal, W.) said he wished to submit one point only to the consideration of the Home Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman had based his action, as had his predecessor, entirely on medical reports. Had it not occurred to the right hon. Gentleman that in view of ascertained and notorious facts, he ought not to place entire reliance upon those reports. In the cases of Gallagher and Whitehead, flourishing reports came to the Home Secretary as to their condition up to within a short time of their release, but no sooner were they released than it was found that they were stark, staring lunatics, and both, he believed, were now inmates of lunatic asylums. What sent them mad? Was it their restoration to their friends? Was it not plain that it must have been the long and cruel ill-treatment and the indignities and hardships to which they were subjected in prison? His point was that the prison medical reports were not reliable. These two cases proved it, and that being so, he appealed to the Home Secretary not to base his action on the official reports of the prison doctors. Their views in those matters were apt to be hardened and severe by their long connection with convicts, and with men who more or less affected from time to time to be in a worse mental and physical condition than they were.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) said that he would only delay the House for a few moments with reference to the cases of these unfortunate men. It occurred to him as being a very important fact which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary should take into his serious consideration that insanity came on by degrees, and was not at once perceptible by those in whose custody the prisoners were. There was evidently no malingering in the case of the unfortunate man Whitehead, who when restored to his friends had escaped from them, and was found wandering about in the city of Cork, and who was now in a lunatic asylum. He had only intervened in the Debate for the purpose of emphasising the medical point to which he had referred, and in the hope that justice would be done and that the men would be released.

Question put, "That those words be there added."

The House divided:—Ayes, 132; Noes, 204.—(Division List, No. 2—appended)—

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, W.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carew, James Laurence
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Collery, Bernard
Colville, John
Commins, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh)
Engledow, Charles John
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William (Dublin)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harrington, Timothy
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Thomas J. (Wexford)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C
Hogan, James Francis
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Cartan, Michael
M'Carthy, Justin
M'Donnell, Dr. M. A. (Queen'sC.)
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
M'Leod, John
Maden, John Henry
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W.F.
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
O'Kelly, James
Oldroyd, Mark
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehy, David
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Tuite, James
Tully, Jasper
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Patrick O'Brien and Dr. Tanner.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Heny.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Biddulph, Michael
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)

Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Fortescue
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wdnesbury)
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hall, Sir Charles
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessell, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
M'Arthur, William
M'Iver, Sir Lewis
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morrell, George Herbert
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, William Cuthbert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Charles Edward (Stafford)
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir John Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Francis
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

AGRICULTURE IN IRELAND.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) moved, as an Amendment to the Address, to add at the end—

"And humbly to represent to your Majesty that the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, combined with the disastrous character of the last season, has rendered it impossible for farmers in Ireland to pay their present rents without depriving themselves of the capital essential to the cultivation of their farms; that the Land Act of last year has failed to provide any effective remedy for this condition of things, nine-tenths of the Irish tenantry being debarred from obtaining any present relief under its provisions; that by the operation of the 7th section of the Act of 1887 and other exclusions, large bodies of tenant-farmers are debarred from all benefit under the Land Acts; and that a state of extreme distress prevails in several districts in Ireland; and humbly to represent to Your Majesty that the condition of the agricultural population in Ireland demands the immediate attention of the Government with a view to comprehensive measures of relief."

He said that, before dealing with the subject of his Amendment, he desired to say a few words in respect to the general character of the Speech from the Throne, particularly as it referred to Ireland. In the late autumn the hon. Member for South Tyrone made a speech in Tyrone, in which he said that now, when Ireland was comparatively quiet and peaceable, when Irish Nationalists were broken up into warring factions, there was a chance of settling many questions without trouble and killing Home Rule, not with kindness, but with justice. In view of that speech it was natural that they should look to the Speech from the Throne for some comprehensive programme calculated to kill Home Rule with justice. They found but one reference to Ireland in the whole course of that Speech, and that reference only amounted to a promise to set up one more Castle Board. He did not intend to criticise, favourably or unfavourably, the project for the institution of a Board of Agriculture in Ireland—it might be that they would be in a position to support the plan of the Government when it was revealed to them—but he confidently declared that to offer Ireland, which was already overridden with Government Boards, another Board was like offering people who were clamouring for bread a stone. He believed that the Speech would cause the bitterest disappointment throughout Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] He was grateful to the Leader of the House for offering a day for the discussion of the subject of the financial relations between the two countries. The opportunity thus afforded would, no doubt, be a more favourable and suitable one for the discussion of the subject than the Debate on the Address, for one reason, if for no other, and that was that it had been, and would be, the desire of himself and his colleagues to keep the question apart from party politics, to keep it as a platform upon which all sections of the Irish representation could agree and fight shoulder to shoulder. [*Cheers.*] In view of the extraordinary change in the state of Irish public life he would gladly have left the agrarian question to sleep for the present, if that were possible, and nothing but a deep sense of the absolute necessities of the case and of the duty he owed to his constituents would induce him to raise the question now. No Irish Member would deny that there existed in Ireland a most wide-spread feeling of alarm in regard to the agrarian situation. Before he turned to the condition of the agricultural population generally and to what had been the effect of the recent Land Act, he wished to direct the attention of the House to two special aspects of the question. One of the clauses of the Land Act of last year, assented to by both Houses without opposition, was passed with the object of promoting the reinstatement of the evicted tenants. The Irish landlords supported the clause; it was passed by a Unionist Government; and it was evident that, apart from certain points of controversy, men generally were of opinion that it was well that the trouble should be got rid of, in the interests of peace and order. In view of those facts, he, for one, had hoped that the evicted tenants would be dealt with in a way to bring a subject of bitter contention to an end. The Nationalists did all they could to facilitate the working of the clause. Boards of Guardians also in the districts where evicted tenants existed joined in the effort, and they appointed Conciliation Committees with a view to bring the landlords and tenants together in order to facilitate a settlement. But he was sorry to say that all those efforts had been almost a total failure, and they had failed because the consent of the very landlords who had treated their tenants unreasonably in the past, and who had been the cause of the trouble, was required to make the clause operative; whereas other Irish landlords who had no evicted tenants were ready and anxious to do all they could to bring about peace. Hence the problem still remained unsolved, and the Irish people deeply regretted it, for they had great sympathy with the evicted tenants. ["Hear, hear!"] The other special aspect of the agrarian question to which he referred was the condition of the unfortunate people in the congested districts in the west of Ireland. In speaking on this matter in that House he felt as one crying in the wilderness. For 12 successive years, in Session after Session, he had drawn the attention of Parliament to the evils under which the poor people in those districts suffered, and although he granted that some progress had been made to remedy them, yet the steps hitherto taken to do so had been of a very partial and ineffective character. Every year, as surely as winter followed summer, dire distress afflicted the people, and during the last 100 years no six successive years had passed without the fell hand of Famine falling upon them. It would hardly be possible to exaggerate the extent of demoralisation caused in the congested districts by the suffering that had been undergone, and by the injudicious and wasteful expenditure of public money for the relief of distress. Any man who had studied the matter would be forced to agree that if only one-third of this money had been laid out 30, 40, 50, or 60 years ago on some well-considered scheme of re-arranging or re-planting the people, as it were, or, in other words, of placing them in a position in which they could keep themselves and thus become a self-supporting population, this famine evil might have been successfully combated. It was not to the credit of England that the evil should be allowed to continue year after year—that no really earnest and practical effort should be made by Government to deal with it. He might be told that a Congested Districts Board had been formed to deal with the matter. He admitted that the Board attempted to grapple with the problem, and had done some good. It had, at all events, recognised that it was the duty of the Government to deal with the evil. He was glad to say the Congested Districts Board was not a Castle Board, and had some power of independent action. It was not until recently, however, that any Nationalist was allowed a seat on the Board—

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: There have always been Nationalists on the Board.

MR. DILLON said he would not go into the point then, but he believed the Nationalists on the Board were only there on recent appointments. His point then, however, was, that from an early stage the Board recognised the true root of the difficulty in the congested districts. They had placed on record their conviction that until they had the power and means of enlarging the holdings of the people they could not possibly hope to apply an effective remedy to the evil which devastated the west of Ireland. They had further stated that there was ample land almost close to the doors of the people which might afford them and their families a decent living, and to which they might be transferred. This distressing condition of things in the congested districts had gone on for years in pretty much the same way, although every year the attention of Parliament had been drawn to it. And before long the painful wail of those poor people would be again heard appealing for assistance. More public money would then have to be sent promptly to their relief, because the Government could not allow starvation to exist in Ireland. According to the information he had received from many districts in the west of Ireland the inhabitants were now again almost at the last extremity, and such was the distress that even if the landlords did not press for their rents the population would soon be thrown on public charity for support. There was no greater or more lasting disaster to a population than to be thrown periodically on public relief to meet their necessities, and he confessed, knowing these people as he did, it had been a matter of wonder to him to find that there was so much industry, so much spirit of independence, so much desire for honest work, and so much self-respect left among these unfortunate people as did undoubtedly exist. These poor people had been accused sometimes of laziness and idleness, but he represented a body of men who but for the persistent industry and the bravery which induced them to face the terrible hardships of agricultural and casual labourers in this country would be entirely unable to make a living at all. He appealed to the Government with regard to this special feature of the Irish agrarian question. They had now great power and great opportunities, for during their term of office the wealth of England had increased by unparalleled leaps and bounds. Now, then, was the time, when Famine was stalking abroad in the west of Ireland, to really face this problem and to bring forward some Bill, which might well be perfectly non-contentious, and which would enable the Congested Districts Board really to set their hand to work and make those congested districts no longer the hotbed and breeding-places of famine, but the homes of an independent and, in an humble way, a prosperous peasantry. He turned now to the larger question of the general condition of Ireland from the agricultural point of view. In doing so he was at a loss for arguments to use in support of the proposition that a remedy, and a very far-reaching and comprehensive remedy, was required. And why was he at a loss? Because there was no statement on the other side. He had watched carefully throughout the autumn and winter the course of public opinion in Ireland, and he was not able, during the last six months, to point to a single case where at a public meeting resolutions were passed declaring that the agrarian question was at all, or even temporarily, in a satisfactory condition. Nor did he know of a single newspaper—except one or two which were violently opposed to all agrarian legislation—which did not take the view that something must be done, and that something without delay. A great many public meetings had been held during the last winter, and those meetings, without exception, had passed strong resolutions demanding some measure which would give to the tenants an opportunity of getting their rents reduced or revised. They did so on the ground—a ground that appeared to him unanswerable—that the fall in agricultural prices had been so great during the last 10 years, continuing down to the present year, that actually the tenants who had been to the Courts were in a very much worse condition as regarded paying their rents than they were before the Act of 1881 was passed, and that reductions which had been made had not been nearly proportionate to the loss incurred by the tenant-farmers through the fall in the value of agricultural produce. These resolutions were passed at meetings of Unionist farmers—meetings with which the Nationalists had no part whatever in the organisation—as well as at mixed meetings of Nationalist and Unionist farmers. He would not weary the House by reading all these resolutions, but he would take one passed at a meeting of tenant farmers on the 19th of November last in the County Down. This resolution declared—

> "that the recent increases by the Chief Commissioner were grossly unjust, and that the rents as fixed before were already too high;"

and further declaring—

> "that the downfall in agricultural prices was so great that it was absolutely impossible for them to continue paying their present rents."

He turned for a moment to an important declaration made by a Member of the Government, the hon. Member for South Tyrone, in Ireland in October last. He combated the view "held by several Irish landlords" that "this depression does not affect Ireland so seriously as elsewhere," and proceeded to quote the fall which had taken place in several articles of agricultural produce. He then said:

> "The farmer may improve his methods or he may strike out new lines for himself, but I am sure of one thing as I am of the sunset this evening, and it is my opinion that he ought to face the situation. Up to the present, when pressed by hard times, the farmer has struck at rent, and it is fair and reasonable for him to do so, as the partners in the soil should each bear his share of the loss. But we have reached a time when any further abatement in the rent will not suffice."

That was the opinon of the Member for South Tyrone. He held that the condition was so desperate that no more abatement of rent would suffice. If no more abatement of rent would suffice, *a fortiori* they ought to have an abatement of rent, for if the condition was desperate with an abatement, how much more desperate would it be if there were no abatement? He must say that the picture drawn by the hon. Member for South Tyrone was no exaggeration. That was the condition of things they had to face. He wished that the present condition of politics in Ireland was so far developed that the Irish landlords and the Unionists would at last come to see wherein, in his judgment, lay their true interest, and how they could best provide for a future which some of them were beginning to think was not very safe in the hands of that House. If they would, even at the eleventh hour, deal generously, even justly, with their tenantry—meet them fairly, and say they were prepared to make every concession that circumstances would admit—then they might carry on together, united in the union which now existed—their movement for the rescuing of Ireland from the abyss of financial ruin and economic misery into which she had been plunged by a long course of years of unjust taxation. Then, in his judgment, the Irish landlords would show great wisdom. If they showed a really reasonable spirit it would be an easy task to obliterate before very long many of the bitter events and memories of the past. He was sorry to say that up to the present he did not see any indications to satisfy him that such a determination existed in the breasts of the great body of Irish landlords. If he had seen any evidence of that spirit, he certainly would have endeavoured to avoid moving this Amendment, with a hope that by quieter means of conciliation there would be obtained such means of relief as were absolutely essential for Irish farmers. He turned to the widest aspect of this case, for it seemed to him that the extent of the economic ruin that threatened Ireland had not been fully placed before the House and the public. After all, looking at the whole matter, there was a certain annual fund out of which all those classes who depend on agriculture in Ireland must draw their means. These classes included, probably, four-fifths of the population of Ireland. All these families and people must draw their means out of this one fund, and there was a means of making a rough estimate of the rise and fall in this common fund, out of which all these classes must be supported. A statement of the full value of the output of the whole agricultural produce of Ireland was given by Dr. Grimshaw, of the Statistical Department, and, in order to make this available for calculating the wealth of the country, he had abstracted the profits assumed by capital, and made allowance for consumption by farmers. The total value of the agricultural produce of Ireland, including stock and crops, was on the average in 1855, £71,900,000 per annum. The average of the five years, 1866 to 1870, was £72,200,000 per annum, a rise of £300,000. In the years 1884 to 1888, the last years for which the figures were given, the amount had fallen to 54 millions per annum, a net loss of 18 millions per annum on a total sum of 72 millions. That was down to 1888, the figures not being made up to a later date, but there was not the slightest doubt, and everybody must admit, that the fall since 1888 had been very considerable, and he did not think he put it too high at an additional five millions, which would make a total fall in the agricultural output of Ireland of 23 millions on a gross original total of 72 millions. [" Hear, hear!"] This was a frightful fact that any Government should take into consideration, it was a condition of things full of alarm and danger. How was that loss distributed? Beyond all controversy it mainly fell upon the farmers. A little over two millions fell upon the landlord class, none of it, or not much of it, on the labouring classes, though some may have suffered from loss of employment. Wages, except in some very poor districts, had not fallen in Ireland. Consequently the main portion of the loss had fallen on the farmers. [" Hear, hear!"] No doubt this loss had been partially met by the power which small farmers had of reducing their food. It was a fact well known in the history of Ireland, and it was one of the main reasons why small farmers had survived periods of agricultural depression more successfully than large farmers, that small farmers, when driven to the wall by adverse seasons, economise in the actual necessaries of life, reducing expenditure on food, clothing, and other necessaries of life. In this way, he had no doubt, a great deal of this loss had been met. It was a terrible fact to be faced or explained, that this enormous loss had to be borne mainly on the shoulders of Irish farmers, and no adequate provision was made by law to meet this state of things. As an illustration, and coming from the general to the particular, he gave the figures published by Mr. Sheehy, an intelligent dairy farmer of County Limerick. He alluded to this case because it had been supposed that dairy farming had not suffered so severely from the depression as other forms of agricultural industry. The results given by Mr. Sheehy showed that the total net produce of the latter from 30 cows, during the five years 1877 to 1881, was annually £1,377. The produce from the same number of cows in the years 1891 to 1895 averaged £827, a net loss of £500 a year, or 40 per cent. on the total produce. But Mr. Sheehy said the state of things revealed last year was still worse. He had sent milk to the local creamery, and though the returns were not made out for the year, he computed from the dockets that the amount would not be more than £130, a loss of 50 per cent. from the gross return in 1881. Even supposing all the tenants who had had their rents fixed before 1888 were now to go into the Courts and get reductions of from 30 to 40 per cent., as some tenants had, in spite of the constitution of the Land Courts, he held even if that were the case that reductions would not divide the burden of loss fairly and equally between the landlords and tenants. Inquiry would show that the general expert opinion was that a general reduction of 30 or 40 per cent. would leave the tenants paying by far the greater portion of the loss, and putting out of account the question of tenants' improvements. He turned to the Land Act of last year. That Act was introduced for the alleged purpose of applying a remedy. It was only right to state that the condition of the agricultural population in Ireland—he did not know as to this country—had grown much worse than it was last year, from the continued fall of prices and an especially bad season. A Bill was introduced last year with the object of applying a remedy to this state of affairs among the agricultural population, and to settle the Irish Land Question, at least for a time. He confessed he had used strong language about that Bill, and had been found fault with for so doing. But Irishmen were accustomed to use strong language, and he did not know that he was a greater sinner in that respect than a great number of his countrymen. The hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) seemed, by his gesture, to question this as a characteristic of Irishmen, but even he "in his green and salad days" was not exempt from it. [*Laughter.*] In anything he said last year about the Land Bill, regarding it from the point of view as a settlement of the Land Question, he still maintained he had said nothing too strong. The Act had not gone near to settling the Irish Land Question. Whereas the main point brought before the House last year, and previously before the Committee upstairs, was that there existed immediate and urgent necessity for some relief in regard to revision of rents, the Act had given no immediate relief, except to a very small section of Irish tenants, the great body of tenants being in precisely the same condition as they were before the Act passed. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said by the Government, when they resisted the almost unanimous opinion of Irish Members, that though they admitted some present rents were exorbitant, this was a grievance that would remedy itself by effluxion of time. He maintained that in the cases of thousands of farmers this would not be remedied by the efflux of time, because these unfortunate men would be reduced to such a condition of poverty by the time that the remedy was offered to them that it would be useless and illusory. Their capital would have all gone. That House had always delayed before giving any relief to the farmers, and, as a result, the great mass of the population had fallen into arrears of rent, and by the operation of those very arrears they had been debarred from participating in the benefits of legislation. Many thousands of the farmers who were now compelled to wait and to lie on the rack of extortionate rents would be unable to meet the landlords' demands. Arrears would accumulate, and when the time arrived for them to appeal to the Land Courts, they would be unable to do so except by permission of their landlords. The time of the House would inevitably be occupied with the consideration of further Arrears Bills, and for that it would have to thank its own carelessnesss, ignorance, or indifference to Irish interests. As to the Land Act of last year, he could not be contradicted when he said that the manner in which it was passed through the House was a disgrace and scandal. The complication of the Irish Land Laws was due to the fact that it had been necessary to wring successive instalments from an unwilling and ignorant House, too busy to attend to Irish affairs. That the Act of last year teemed with complicated legal points was clear, and yet it was rushed through the House in the hours of the night when Members were overwhelmed with weariness and nearly asleep. That would not be the right way to do business of much less importance, and the circumstances added one more argument to strengthen the conviction of Ireland that that House was not the proper place in which to transact Irish business. He admitted that there were good points in the Act of last year, but that measure had not nearly settled the Land Question. It had left out of its purview seven-eighths of the tenantry, who now stood in precisely the same position, as regarded their present immediate necessities, as they would have been in had no such Bill been introduced. The Act had not shortened the statutory term; it had not completely settled the question of improvements; it had not improved the position of the 30,000 or 40,000 tenants who were deprived of their rights under the Land Acts by the infamous seventh clause of the Act of 1887, which was thrust down their throats by the Government of that day as a great boon, but which had worked immeasurable injury to the Irish peasantry; it had left the question of town parks unsettled, and it had not dealt with the enormous question of arrears, which stood just where it was before. A tenant in arrears had recently gone to the agent of his landlord, Lord Clanricarde, and paid two years' rent in the hope that he might be allowed to go into the Land Court. His request, however, was refused. A Bill shortening the judicial term and facilitating entrance to the Land Court would undoubtedly confer enormous advantage on the tenants, and to a great extent mitigate the extraordinary stringency of the present position. He was not satisfied with the arrangements for the administration of the Act of 1896, and was inclined to think that the list of new Sub-Commissioners would not give very general satisfaction. He would give an illustration showing the grotesque absurdities to which this series of Land Acts, passed without due consideration, had led in Ireland. In Armagh, about two months ago, three Sub-Commissioners adjudicated in a series of rent cases and made large reductions. They were second term cases, and the average reduction was between 30 and 40 per cent. on the previous judicial rents. When appeals were lodged in these cases, two Court valuers were sent down to examine and report upon the farms. One of these valuers, a Sub-Commissioner himself, agreed in his valuation with the three Sub-Commissioners, but the other Court valuer fixed the value of the farms at about 20 per cent. more than the estimate of his colleague. What was the result? The Court of Appeal raised the rents by about 10 per cent.; so four gentlemen of equal standing, who had examined the farms and agreed upon a fair rent, were overruled by one man who had no greater qualifications than they had. Such were the results of the system of appeals in Ireland. He trusted that in the Queen's Speech the Government had not said their last word as to what was going to be done for the agricultural population of Ireland. He claimed to speak in this matter, not only for Nationalists, but also for the Unionist farmers of the North of Ireland, who, he hoped, would watch closely the language and votes of their representatives in Parliament. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan S.) seconded the Amendment, and expressed disappointment that so small a portion of the Queen's Speech had been devoted to Ireland. A Board of Agriculture was to be constituted; and he was struck with the fact that last year the Land Act occupied the last place in the Queen's Speech, the same position being allotted to the Board of Agriculture this year. He supposed the Government imagined that by dangling this kind of bribe before the eyes of the Irish Members it would be a sufficient reason to hinder him and his hon. Friends from compelling the Government to do their duty in the same way as last year in connection with the Land Act. He regretted to say that the Land Act of last year had fallen far short of the anticipations of the Irish farmers; and if the Government thought that the Board of Agriculture to be set up was going to satisfy the Irish people they made a great mistake. A great many Boards already existed in Ireland, and if the Board of Agriculture was to be constituted on the same lines as the Board of Works and the Local Government Board, then he frankly told the Government that they would be better without it. The question was not so much one of Boards as of the manner in which they were administered. A short time ago drainage works were necessary in Dundalk, and the town offered to lend money to the Guardians at 3 per cent. But the Local Government Board would not allow them to accept that loan; they were compelled to come to the Treasury and pay 5 per cent. for the loan. It was notoriously difficult for Irish Members to make English Members understand Irish affairs. Many hon. Gentlemen knew absolutely nothing about Ireland except what they read in the newspapers, and especially in the hostile Press; but on the knowledge so acquired they were in the habit of voting against Irishmen in that House. English Members were accustomed, for example, to see all the produce grown in the country consumed in it; not so Ireland. Ireland was dependent on England to consume the produce grown in Ireland. All the produce raised in Ireland was sent to England, and it was almost impossible for Irish farmers to obtain a price that would compensate them for their outlay and labour, or make farming productive at the present time. The depression in Irish agriculture was very great. In September last year £250,000 less of cattle were exported from Ireland to England than in the previous year, and this was due to the number of cattle imported from America. Again, barley in Ireland at the present time was almost unsaleable, and horses were a drug in the market. Turnips and potatoes were also unsaleable, and indeed there was not an article of produce in which the Irish farmer could compete with the foreigner. He hoped the Government would see their way to consider in what respect they could benefit Ireland by devoting to its aid some of the large surplus which would be at their disposal shortly; the time had come when Ireland deserved justice. She had been long enough the step-child of this country; 1895 was a bad year for the Irish farmer, but 1896 was worse. The prices of crops were lower now than they had been before, and the Irish farmers were practically at their wits' ends to know how to make ends meet. He hoped that the Government would not turn a deaf ear to the appeal made by the hon. Member for East Mayo. Distress largely existed in the country, and the farmers had not been able to pay their shopkeepers' bills. If it had not been for the toleration of the shopkeepers, many persons in Ireland would be starving at the present time.

The hon. Member was speaking at half-past five o'clock, when the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.) moved:—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon, and further to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company;

"That the Committee have leave to hear Counsel to such extent as they shall see fit, and have power to send for persons, papers, and records;

Mr. James Daly.

"That the Committee do consist of Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Bigham, Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Secretary Chamberlain, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Cripps, Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. John Ellis, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. George Wyndham;

"That Seven be the quorum."

MR. T. M. HEALY said he understood that last Session an undertaking was given that when the Committee was reappointed something would be done to meet the claim of the Irish Nationalists to have an additional member on the Committee, and he hoped to hear that the Colonial Secretary agreed in that view. He had no objection to the Committee itself; he believed it would be most valuable; but Irish Nationalists had to assert their right to claim the presence of an additional member upon it.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN suggested that the point raised by the hon. and learned Member might be postponed until they reached the question of how many members the Committee should consist of; and in the meantime the House might agree to the first two paragraphs, which simply set up the Committee.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff) said that his objection was based upon different grounds. He did not object to its composition, but to the policy of the reappointment of the Committee at all. He thought circumstances had very much changed since last Session, and that the House may find itself in the most undignified position if it were to consent to the reappointment of this Committee, and therefore he would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would consent to put the Motion down for some hour on another day when the objections to the policy of the reappointment of the Committee could be fairly stated.

MR. T. M. HEALY said that so far as he was concerned he accepted the suggestion of the Colonial Secretary.

*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member for Cardiff persist in his objection?

*MR. MACLEAN: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN asked to be allowed to postpone the Motion till to-morrow.

Adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 21st January 1897.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE PRIME MINISTER (The MARQUESS OF SALISBURY): I am told that there is no business on the Paper for the next few days, and I do not know that any support is given to the Constitution by our coming here without business. [*Laughter.*] I should suggest that we adjourn until Thursday, and I move accordingly.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 21st January 1897.

QUESTIONS.

BURIAL FEES (ULVERSTON).

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his communications with the Ulverston Burial Board and the District Council of Ulversthorpe, Leicestershire, have resulted in a revision of their tables of burial fees and charges which has brought them into conformity with the law.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have this morning received replies by telegraph from the Ulverston District Council and the Countesthorpe Parish Council, the authorities, I presume, to which the hon. Member alludes, from which it appears that their fees and charges are now in conformity with the law.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS asked why there had been a delay of several months?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said he telegraphed for information, and received the reply he had given. If the hon. Gentleman desired him to inquire further he would do so.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, when the Report of the Post Office Inter-Parliamentary Commission will be presented to Parliament, and how soon may it be expected to be printed and obtainable by the public?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The Report is now under the consideration of the Treasury and the Postmaster General. As soon as a decision has been arrived at on the several questions raised in the Report, it will be laid before the House.

AGRICULTURAL DISTRESS (WESTPORT UNION).

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the extent of the distress prevailing in Westport Union owing to the failure of the crops; and, whether he intends taking any steps; and, if so, what, towards relieving such distress?

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) whether his attention has been called to the distress of a most acute character which prevails in the Swinford, Westport, and Clifden Poor Law Unions, as well as in other districts along the western seaboard of Ireland, such as Achill, Belmullet, and Carna; (2) what steps, if any, have been taken by the Government to cope with this distress; and, (3) whether the Government will without delay adopt some remedial measures, either of a temporary nature adequate to the emergency or of a more permanent character, which would have for object the prevention, as far as possible, of these frequently recurring periods of destitution among the cottier peasantry of these western counties and islands?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Government has been directed to the condition of the people in Achill, county Mayo, owing to the failure of the potato crop; and, what is the last Report received on the matter?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): With the permission of the House, I will reply at the same time to the two questions which follow, standing in the names of the hon. Member for South Mayo (Mr. Davitt) and the hon. and learned Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). The condition and prospects of the poorer classes in the localities referred to have received the careful attention of Government, who have been in frequent communication with the Local Government Board and with the local Police Authorities on the subject. As regards the Swinford Union, the Local Government Board do not anticipate the occurrence of abnormal distress in this district; and in the Clifden Union the Board are advised that with the exception, perhaps, of a few isolated townlands, the resources of the ordinary Poor Law will suffice to meet any cases of necessity that may arise there. In Achill Island, which forms part of the Westport Union, I believe the Congested Districts Board are making arrangements for the reconstruction of a pier on the Island, which, it is presumed, will afford some employment to the poorer classes. The Board's Inspectors in the West of Ireland have been instructed to watch carefully the condition of the people in all districts in which there is the slightest chance of scarcity or destitution arising, and one of the Members of the Board is at the present moment in the West making further investigations into the subject. The Government do not for the present contemplate the adoption of the special remedial measures suggested in the second paragraph of the question of the hon. Member for South Mayo.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury why no mention is made in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech of the Irish Agricultural Rating Bill; is it intended to make Ireland a grant proportionate to what England received under the Act of last year; and, if not, will Ireland be treated for the purpose of this special allocation as a separate entity?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The position of Ireland in reference to the money due to her in consequence of the English Rating Act is indicated in the Irish Suspensory Act of last Session. I think the title is "Local Taxation (Ireland) and Estate Duty, 1896, Act."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman go no further with his answer?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think my reply covers the question.

INDIAN FAMINE AND PLAGUE

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he could state to the House what is the amount paid into the credit of the Indian Famine Relief Fund since the famine of 1877; what is the total amount of withdrawals from that fund for purposes apart from the relief of distress during the past 20 years; and what amount remained to the credit of the fund at the commencement of the existing famine; and, what is the estimated requirement of the Government of India for famine relief during the next three months?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): There is no Indian Famine Relief Fund. The amount of taxation imposed for Indian famine relief and insurance was in 1877 estimated at Rx. 1,104,900 annually. Owing to the Afghan war the scheme did not come into operation for four years; and, if those be excluded, the total receipts are estimated at Rx. 16,513,500. The expenditure has been—on construction of protection works, Rx. 12,004,022; on reduction or avoidance of debt, Rx. 5,327,299; total, Rx. 17,331,321. It is difficult to forecast the exact expenditure upon famine relief for the next three months, as the numbers fluctuate so greatly from week to week, but the loss caused by famine directly and indirectly for the financial year 1896-97 will certainly exceed three and a-half crores of rupees.

MR. LOUGH asked if he was to understand that some part of the cost of the Afghan war was defrayed out of this fund?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said that when a country was involved in war it was obliged to put on one side the ordinary financial operations. During the time the Afghan war continued the money raised by this taxation was not available for famine insurance.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) inquired how much was spent on railways?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: A very large proportion. It was never intended that the fund should be put in a separate box and allowed to accumulate.

MR. G. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in view of the grave reference in Her Majesty's gracious Speech to the famine and plague in India, he will consider the advisability of remitting to the Indian Government the cost to them of the Indian troops engaged in the Egyptian expedition?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I can quite understand and sympathise with the feeling that has prompted this question, but the two subjects which are referred to in it are quite distinct, and I have no reason whatever to suppose that the Indian Government would at all desire that they should be coupled together.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the attention of the Indian Government has been called or will be called to the necessity of having suitable hospital accommodation at Bombay for the isolation and treatment of cases of plague; and, whether in view of the great suitability of the Military lines and cantonment at Colaba for such a purpose, the Indian Government will find other accommodation for the troops in Bombay?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The attention of the Government of India has been called to the necessity of providing suitable accommodation at Bombay for the isolation and treatment of cases of plague; but I do not propose to interfere with their discretion in regard to moving the troops from Colaba, or using the barracks as plague hospitals. I understand that temporary hospital accommodation of a suitable kind could easily be erected on the open ground in and around Bombay.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the enormous loss of revenue which India will suffer through the prevalence af famine and plague in that country, Her Majesty's Government propose to invite Parliament to vote a grant of public money in aid of the Indian Exchequer?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I have to say that the Indian Government are in no lack of funds, and, until we know the outcome of the famine expenditure and the loss of revenue caused by that, it is premature to discuss the assistance of a grant of public money from the Imperial Exchequer. There is no precedent, so far as I know, for any such course.

POST OFFICE (LIMERICK).

MR. FRANCIS O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what progress has been made as regards the advertisement for a site on which to build a new post office in the city of Limerick; and, whether having regard to the admitted necessity for a new building, he will direct expedition to be made in the negotiations to effect that purpose?

MR. HANBURY: An advertisement for a site for a new post office at Limerick was published some time ago and in response several offers for the purpose have been lately received. The Department is now carefully inquiring into the suitability of each of the proposed sites, but I regret to add that none of them—so far as the examination has as yet gone—appear to be acceptable.

TURKEY (PARLIAMENTARY PAPER).

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Parliamentary Paper (Turkey, No. 8, 1896), presented to the House on August 10th 1896, has not yet been issued; whether, in view of the present importance of all correspondence relating to the Asiatic Provinces, he can state the reason for this delay; and whether he can give the House an assurance that this Paper will be in the hands of Members at an early date?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The delay has been occasioned by the necessity of referring the Reports, which are very bulky, to the writers for revision before publication, and by the large amount of other papers under preparation. It is hoped that the book will be in the hands of hon. Members on Friday.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that, in many of the unions in the South of Ireland, conciliation committees, consisting of an equal number of ex-officio and elected guardians, were formed during the past autumn for the purpose of promoting settlements between landlords and their evicted tenants under the re-instatement clauses of the Land Act of last year; (2) whether he is aware that, while the evicted tenants promptly accepted the mediation of these committees, the landlords almost without exception declined their services; and (3) whether steps will be taken to render these clauses effective by the appointment of arbitration committees with compulsory powers?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I believe it is a fact that committees were formed in certain Unions of the South of Ireland for the purpose of promoting settlements under the Act of last year, but I have no official information of the number of such committees or of the results of the negotiations entered into by them. The answer to the third paragraph is in the negative.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked if the hon. and learned Gentleman would cause further inquiry to be made in the matter?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND said that if he had reason to believe the information received was incorrect he would be most happy to inquire further.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return relating to Applications of Evicted Tenants under the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, on the Paper?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: There is no objection to state the total number of applications made by evicted tenants under Section 47 of the Act of last year, and the general results of such applications; but it is undesirable to publish the names of the landlord and the former tenant in each case as well as the ruling of the Land Commission thereon, and the Government are unable therefore to consent to a Return containing the information under the latter heads.

JUDICIAL RENTS (IRELAND).

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that large numbers of Irish tenant farmers, whose rents were fixed subsequent to 1882, and who are thus debarred from availing themselves of the Land Act, are unable to continue paying their judicial rents, and have been refused any abatement by their landlords; and, whether he will consider the advisability of affording these tenants some immediate relief?

MR. MICHAEL McCARTAN (Down, S.) asked the hon. and learned Gentleman if he was aware that meeting after meeting had been held recently in the North of Ireland and that it had been declared that a reduction of 50 per cent. was absolutely necessary to save them from ruin?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I have no information bearing out the statement in the Question as to the inability of tenants to pay their rents. If the suggestion in the second part of the Question is that the Government should follow the precedent of 1887, I may say they have no intention to legislate in this direction. I am aware that tenants in different parts of Ireland have passed resolutions to the effect that they desire a reduction of 50 per cent.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Irish Lights Board or the Board of Trade have made any, and if any, what provision for the widows and families of the men lost by the foundering of the Daunt's Rock lightship *Puffin* in October last?

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, with regard to the fact that the lightship *Puffin* was lost with all hands at her station, Daunt's Rock, on October 7th, 1896, and that, when being towed by the *Princess Alexandra* from Kingstown, after being two hours at sea, she was reported leaking, and was brought back to Kingstown for repairs, whether he is aware if any survey and report thereon was made to the Irish Lights Board after this occurrence; whether he can state if the survey of lightships under the management of the Irish Lights Board is similar to that to which trading vessels are subjected; whether the supply of boats to Irish lightships is according to the Board of Trade requirements; and, whether he will order a sworn public inquiry into the causes of this disaster?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's), in the absence of Mr. RITCHIE, said: The Commissioners of Irish Lights have applied to the Board of Trade for sanction to the payment of pensions to the widows, and gratuities to the children of the married members of the crew of the Daunt's Rock Lightship, and of pensions or gratuities to the unmarried. The grant of these allowances is governed by the terms of the Superannuation Acts, and the Board are at present making inquiries as to what would be awarded by the Treasury under these Acts in analogous cases in the Civil Service. My right hon. Friend has communicated with the Commissioners of Irish Lights, and is informed by them that the *Puffin* Lightship, a few hours after leaving Kingstown Harbour in tow of the *Princess Alexandra*, was brought back in consequence of a leak in the hawse-pipe above the water line. A report of the occurrence was made to the Commissioners, a survey held, and the eak repaired. Surveys of lightships are made by the qualified officers of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, and, in their opinion, are probably stricter than those to which trading vessels are subjected. The Board of Trade requirements as to boats are not applicable to lightships, but each Irish lightship carries two strong, seaworthy boats, 16 and 20 feet long, sufficient for the crew of eight men. The question of raising the wreck, which would be an expensive operation, is now under consideration. If the wreck is raised the Board of Trade will consider whether any useful purpose would be served by holding a public Inquiry.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked if he was to understand that this provision would be of a permanent character.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS thought it would have that character, but upon that subject it would be well the hon. Gentleman should address a question direct to the President of the Board of Trade.

ARMY FOREIGN MEAT SUPPLY.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state what decision has been arrived at relative to the supply of foreign meat to the troops stationed in Ireland; and when such decision will take effect?

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether it is the intention of the War Office to lessen the percentage of foreign meat given to the troops; and, whether it would be possible to have the troops and horses supplied by native produce?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The matter, which proves to be more complicated and difficult than was at first supposed, is still undergoing special and careful inquiry, and no decision can yet be given. If, as the result of the Inquiry, it is found possible to make an alteration in the present system of supply both of meat and forage, the change would take effect on and from the next occasion on which tenders are sought.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked whether the last tenders issued contained the old conditions?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said that if no change was made in the conditions of supply, the old conditions obtained.

MR. FIELD : The hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of my question, viz., " whether it would be possible to have the troops and horses supplied by native produce ? "

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS : I answered that to the effect that I cannot give an answer.

REFORM PRISONERS AT PRETORIA.

MR. MACLEAN : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps he has taken during the Recess to obtain the release of Mr. Davis and Mr. Sampson, the two Johannesburg Reformers, who are still kept in prison at Pretoria ?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.) : I stated in answer to similar questions last Session that I had informed Messrs. Sampson and Davis that if they would approach the Government of the South African Republic as was done by the other Reformers who were tried on the same charge and received the same sentence, I should be glad to support their petition. I am sorry to say that Messrs. Sampson and Davis have hitherto declined to take this course, and I do not feel justified in making an appeal on their behalf which they refuse to make for themselves. I think I may be allowed to add that in my judgment these gentlemen have already suffered very severely for any error they may have committed, and I think it would be good policy on the part of President Kruger to take their case into consideration.

MR. MACLEAN : Will the right hon. Gentleman commend to President Kruger the example set by King Menelik, of Abyssinia, in releasing the Italians ? [*Laughter.*]

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) : Do I understand that these men can get out at once if they would go through the formality of giving an undertaking to be of good behaviour in the future ?

Financial Secretary to the War Office.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : I cannot answer that question positively, but the other gentlemen who did make an appeal were released. [" Hear, hear ! "]

FACTORY ACTS.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his intention to introduce in the present Session a Bill for the consolidation of the Factory Acts, with any minor amendments of the Law, such as the generalisation of the Particulars section in piece-work trades, and the amendment of the sweated districts provisions of the Act of 1895, stated by him to have proved unworkable ?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY : A consolidation Bill has been in draft for some time, but I have decided not to proceed with it until an amending Bill, which experience of the working of the Act of 1895 has already shown will be necessary, has first been passed. Suggestions for amending certain of the provisions of that Act, including those mentioned by the right hon. Member, are under my consideration.

BULGARIAN TRIBUTE AND TURKISH DEBT.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have during the past year received communication of any dispatch from the Turkish Government calling attention to the obligation assumed by the Powers of Europe, signatories of the Treaty of Berlin, by Articles IX., XXXIII. and XLII. of that Treaty, to fix the amount of the annual tribute to be paid by Bulgaria to Turkey by agreement between themselves, and also to fix by agreement between their representatives at Constantinople in concert with the Sublime Porte the portion of the public debt of Turkey to be borne respectively by Bulgaria, by Montenegro, and by Servia, and asking the powers to fulfil this obligation ; if so, whether any reply was sent by Her Majesty's Government to such representation, and whether Her Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table of this House a copy of the dispatch itself, and of the reply, if any, made thereto; and whether he will inform the House what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken at any time during the 18 years since the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 to come to the stipulated agreement with the other Powers, and with what results?

*MR. CURZON: A note to the effect mentioned by the hon. Member, and referring also to the portion of the debt to be borne by Greece, was received from the Turkish Ambassador on the 22nd ultimo. In reply, his Excellency was informed that it is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Treaty of Berlin should be exactly fulfilled, and that if for that purpose it should appear desirable to do so, they would be ready to exchange views on the subject with the other Powers signatory of that Treaty. These notes can be laid upon the Table of the House if it is so desired. Prior to 1885 Her Majesty's Government made repeated but unsuccessful endeavours to obtain a settlement of the question. In that year it was again raised by the Turkish Government, and a circular dispatch was addressed to the Powers by Lord Granville, recapitulating these attempts and inquiring whether the Powers would instruct their representatives at Constantinople to resume consideration of the matter. The Powers seemed disposed to agree, with the exception of Russia, from whom no reply was received. In September, 1887, Her Majesty's Agent at Sofia was instructed to present to the Bulgarian Government a letter from the Council of Foreign Bondholders calling attention to the failure of that Government to fulfil the financial obligations imposed upon it and upon Eastern Roumelia under the Treaty of Berlin. An arrangement was arrived at for the payment of the Eastern Roumelian Tribute, but nothing was done as regards Bulgaria's share of the Ottoman Debt. Pending a decision on that case no further steps were taken with regard to the other countries concerned.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The right hon. Gentleman is, of course, aware that the question is not to be submitted to the representatives of the Powers at Constantinople. The question of the Bulgarian tribute is to be considered, not by the representatives of the Powers, but by the Powers themselves. Has the right hon. Gentleman borne that in mind?

*MR. CURZON: Oh, yes, I was perfectly aware of that when I drew up the answer.

TURKISH REFORMS.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign affairs, (1) whether Her Majesty's Government still adhere to the scheme of reforms for Turkey as proposed by Sir Philip Currie on the 19th January 1895, subsequently discussed and modified in concert with the French and Russian Ambassadors, presented to the Sultan on the 11th May 1895, accepted in its final improved form by the Sultan, promulgated by Irade on the 17th October 1895, and declared by Sir Philip Currie to contain provisions which he believed were sufficient to give security for life and property to the Armenians provided that they could be really enforced; (2) whether this scheme has already been and is now being carried into effect in pursuance of the Irade of October 1895, whether another and further scheme of reforms is now being drawn up in secret conclave by the Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople; and, (3) whether he can give the House an assurance that the new scheme will not involve that direct interference in the internal affairs of Turkey which is forbidden by Article 9 of the Treaty of Paris, and also forbidden by implication by Article 63 of the Treaty of Berlin.

*MR. CURZON: The scheme of reforms to which the hon. Member refers in his first paragraph related specifically to the Anatolian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Some of these reforms, to the execution of which Her Majesty's Government continue to attach importance, have been put into operation; but it cannot be said that they have at all generally been carried into effect. The reforms which the Ambassadors are now discussing at Constantinople are reforms in Ottoman administration;

but it is the desire of the Governmenst concerned that strict secrecy should for the present be maintained as to their character.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Do I understand that the right hon. Gentleman cannot give me an assurance that the reforms will not be in violation of the Treaty of Paris?

*Mr. CURZON: Considering that we have not as yet had any scheme put before us, I cannot give an assurance as to what may be its contents.

NORFOLK ISLAND.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received an official report of the circumstances attending the recent change of Government in Norfolk Island; whether the duties, powers, and responsibilities of the newly-appointed Administrator or Government Resident have been permanently defined; whether a formal protest was presented to Lord Hampden by the elected chief magistrate of the Norfolk Island community; and whether, under the new constitution, any of the self-governing rights and privileges which the inhabitants of Norfolk Island enjoyed since 1856 have been retained?

Mr J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have received an official report on the subject, and papers will shortly be laid on the Table containing all the details, which will place the hon. Member in possession of the facts.

NEW HEBRIDES.

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any ground for the apprehension now felt in Australia with respect to the probable early annexation of the New Hebrides by France; and, whether the joint agreement between England and France in reference to this group is still in force?

Mr. CURZON: The agreements entered into between France and this country in 1887 and 1888 with regard to the New Hebrides are still in force, and Her Majesty's Government are, therefore, not aware of any grounds for the apprehension to which the hon. Member refers.

BENIN EXPEDITION.

Mr. DAVITT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the recent expedition to the King of Benin was ordered or undertaken at the instance or with the knowledge or consent of Her Majesty's Government, or solely on the authority of the Royal Niger Company's Protectorate without the cognisance or assent of the Foreign Office; whether it is competent for the Royal Niger Company's officials to embark upon such expeditions without acquainting Her Majesty's Government with the purpose of the undertaking and the means to be employed for the successful execution thereof; and whether the officials of this Company can now command the services of Her Majesty's forces and the use of public moneys for the prosecution of a war?

Mr. CURZON: The hon. Member is, I think, labouring under some misapprehension. The unfortunate mission to the King of Benin had nothing to do with the Niger Company, within the sphere of whose Protectorate Benin does not fall; but was undertaken by the officials of the Niger Coast Protectorate, whose duty it is, as opportunity may serve, to make arrangements for visiting the different parts of their district, but who had not in this case sought the previous sanction of Her Majesty's Government.

ESCAPED CONVICTS.

Mr. DAVITT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what law of the realm a prison warder or official is authorised to fire upon and kill a prisoner for an attempt to escape from custody. And whether, if any existing law confers this authority upon prison officials, he will favour such a modification of it as will prevent the recurrence of such an event as the killing of the convict Carter at Dartmoor on Christmas Eve last.

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has any objection to lay upon the table a copy of the instructions regulating the conduct of officers in convict prisons in the event of a prisoner in their custody attempting to escape?

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Attorney General upon what authority the warder acted in killing a convict named William Carter, whilst Carter was endeavouring to escape from Dartmoor prison on 24th December, 1896?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The authority to shoot an escaping felon is given by the common law. The rule, as stated by the received authorities and affirmed by successive opinions of the law officers of the Crown, is that if a felon flies from justice and is killed by an officer in pursuit, the homicide is justifiable, if he could not otherwise be overtaken. The right to use firearms in the last resort cannot, I think, be safely dispensed with; but I am considering whether any alterations can be made in regard to the weapons to be used or otherwise, so as to diminish as far as possible the chance of causing death. I may say in answer to the question of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green that I shall have no objection to laying on the table of the House the standing orders applicable to these cases.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked whether anything in the nature of a trial took place beyond the coroner's inquest?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, sir.

*MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) asked at what distance the convict was from the warder when the latter fired?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I believe that two warders fired at him—one at 20 and the other at 50 yards, in a thick fog.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If nothing in the nature of a trial takes place, who decides whether the homicide is justifiable or not?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The coroner's jury are the proper authority to decide the question.

MATABELELAND.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in accordance with the undertaking given, the Chartered Company have paid the expenses of the late campaign in Matabeleland; and, can he state the exact amount that has been received?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Chartered Company have been paying from time to time the claims made upon them on behalf of the War Department. There are, of course, outstanding claims not yet settled. A large portion of the expenses of the campaign for stores, &c., has been defrayed directly by the Chartered Company.

MR. BAYLEY asked what was the exact amount that had been received.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said he could not give the exact amount.

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that Dr. Foster Newland has remonstrated against his dismissal without notice or complaint from his position as medical officer to the Irish Lights Board in the Kingstown District after a satisfactory service of 20 years; and, whether he will cause an investigation to be made into the facts?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: My right hon. Friend has been informed by Dr. Newland that he has been dismissed from his position. His employment rests entirely with the Commissioners, the Board of Trade control being limited to approval of the fees.

RAILWAY RATES (IRELAND).

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the high scale of railway rates and charges in Ireland, and to consider the question of acquiring the Irish lines by purchase, to be more economically worked as State railways; also to inquire into the working of Irish canals with a view to their purchase, to be given as free waterways for commercial traffic?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND: My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland requests me to say that the Government do not propose to appoint a further Royal Commission in regard to railways in Ireland. The suggested State purchase of railways in Ireland was condemned by a Royal Commission appointed in 1865, presided over by the present Duke of Devonshire, and was again condemned by a Royal Commission appointed in 1886, presided over by Sir James Allport. The condition of affairs on which these conclusions were based has not since altered.

UNIFICATION OF TIME AT SEA.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Her Majesty's Government has received a memorial from the Council of the Royal Colonial Institute, urging, at the suggestion of the Royal Society of Canada, the advisability, in the interests of navigation and commerce, of taking early steps to secure the unification of time at sea; and whether Her Majesty's Government contemplate taking action in the desired direction?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The question of the unification of time, which is a very debateable one, has received long and careful consideration for many years. The alteration of the astronomical day cannot be effected for the sea alone, as it affects astronomers even more closely than sailors, and it must also be carried out by international agreement. Foreign Powers publishing astronomical ephemerides were consulted in 1894, and when it was found, from the replies received in 1885, that the change would not be accepted by all these, the Foreign Office was requested to inform the Powers in question that no further steps would be taken by the British Admiralty. The Nautical Almanac for 1901 has therefore been calculated on the existing system.

LOAN FUND BOARD (IRELAND).

MR. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the remarks of His Honour Judge Webb in dismissing, at the Donegal Winter Sessions on the 9th instant, an action for the recovery of £10 on a promissory note, brought by the Loan Fund Society against William Travers, who had by a system of double interest recovered fines, costs paid to the Loan Fund Society £25 on foot of the original loan of £10 for which he was sued; whether he had observed that the learned Judge stated that probably half a million of money is dependent upon various questions with regard to these societies which have evaded the Act of Parliament; whether the Chief Secretary has been able to fulfil the undertaking given by him towards the close of the last Session that he would investigate the serious charges brought against the administration of the Loan Fund Board; and, whether he has devised any remedy for the abatement of the illegal exactions and oppression to which the people have been subjected by the loan fund system?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Special Committee appointed last year to inquire into the administration of the Loan Fund Board and loan funds has yet made its report; whether the report will be presented to Parliament; and when; and whether the Government intend to take any and what steps in the matter?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND: In reply to this question and the question standing in the name of the hon. and learned Member for East Donegal, my attention has been directed to a newspaper report of the observations of the learned Judge in the case referred to. The Committee appointed by the Loan Fund Board last year to inquire into the administration of the Charitable Loan Funds has completed its investigations and made a report to the Board, who have the report under their consideration, and are in consultation with their legal advisers as to proposed reforms in the administration. Until the Government have received the suggestions of the Loan Fund Board it would be premature to state the intentions of the Government. I do not think that the report can, with propriety, at the present stage be presented to Parliament.

VACCINATION.

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if it is the intention of the Government to take any steps towards carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Vaccination during the present Session; and, whether they will advise boards of guardians to discontinue prosecutions for non-compliance with the Vaccination Acts until the Government are ready to deal with the subject?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I can only state at present that the report of the Royal Commission on Vaccination is receiving the consideration of the Local Government Board. It is the duty of boards of guardians to enforce the existing law, and the report of the Royal Commission does not in any way relieve them of their duty in this matter.

MR. LOGAN asked if the hon. Gentleman was aware that many boards of guardians, in spite of the interim report of the Royal Commission, still prosecuted people more than once, and whether he did not think it advisable to alter the law in conformity with the recommendations of the Commission?

MR. LOUGH: And will the hon. Gentleman also tell us in a word what is the existing law? [*Laughter.*]

[No answer was given to either question.]

ILLEGAL TRAWLING.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the fact that fines for illegal trawling have, by the frequent repetition of offences by the same trawler, been shown to be ineffectual, he will consider the advisability of taking such steps as will admit of penalties being inflicted on the owner as well as on the master of vessels engaged in illegal trawling?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am hardly prepared to accept the statement contained in the first portion of the hon. Member's question. As regards the second portion, it is not at present proposed to legislate for the purpose of altering the provisions of section 10 sub-section 6 of the Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act of 1895, which give power in certain circumstances of recovering penalties from the master.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the negotiations which have been in progress between the Scottish Office and other departments in regard to the question of a more effective sea police around the coast of Scotland are now sufficiently advanced to enable Her Majesty's Government to announce the policy which it proposes to adopt in order to protect the interests of line fishermen against the depredations of trawlers?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: In reply to the hon. Member, I have been in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland, and hope shortly to be able to make a statement on the subject.

PROBATE DUTY GRANT (IRELAND)

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, in estimating the Irish share of the Probate Duty Grant as one-ninth in The Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888, this calculation took account of Probate Duty on Irish assets paid in England where the grant of probate or administration happened to be made in that country?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The division of the Probate Duty Grant between the three Kingdoms in the proportion of 80, 11, and 9 in 1888 was not based on the amount of Probate Duty paid in each. If it had been I am afraid that the Irish share would have been only half what it is.

CODIFICATION OF LAWS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has taken into consideration the advisability of codifying the Acts relating to the Income Tax; and, if so, with what result?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I should be very glad that these Acts should be codified, but measures of consolidation cannot possibly be passed unless it is clearly recognised by Members of both Houses that they are uncontentious, and that Amendments altering the Law cannot be discussed. The House Tax Consolidation Bill had to be dropped last Session owing to its being treated as a contentious measure, and until I am able to judge whether this discouraging experience will be repeated I cannot set on foot a work of such labour as the consolidation of the Income Tax Law.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland how it happens that, whereas Bills are introduced and passed every year codifying Acts of Parliament relating to England, nothing is ever done towards consolidating Acts relating to Ireland; whether his attention has been called to the following Irish Acts, all non-contentious in their character, which might with great advantage be (respectively) consolidated: the County Courts Acts, the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts, the Fishery Acts, the Labourers Acts, the Land Purchase Acts, the Landed Property Improvement Acts, the Lunacy Acts, the Municipal Corporations Acts, the Poor Law Acts, the Public Works Acts, and the Tramways Acts; who has the direction of the work of consolidating Acts of Parliament; and, whether the same authority regulates the matter for England and Ireland?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The question is incorrect in assuming that nothing has been done towards consolidating Acts relating to Ireland. On the contrary, of the 24 consolidating Bills passed in 1888 relating to England, 19 relate to Ireland as well. Bills are in preparation to consolidate several of the Acts mentioned in the question; but, owing to the limited staff of the Irish Office (there being only one draftsman) it has not yet been found possible to introduce them. I may add that I cannot admit that all the Acts mentioned in the question are non-contentious in their character. I am informed that in England the Statute Law Committee lay before the Lord Chancellor from time to time suggestions as to consolidating statutes, and if the suggestions are adopted the work is generally carried out by Treasury draftsmen in any time which can be spared from the current work of legislation. There is no authority, so far as I can ascertain, which has special direction of the work of consolidating Acts in England and Ireland.

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will the Government measures for abolition of slavery apply to the whole Sultanate of Zanzibar or merely to the Protectorate of Zanzibar, excluding Mombasa and the territories of the Sultan on the mainland within the ten mile limit?

MR. CURZON: For the reasons which I stated in the House on Tuesday, namely, that Mr. Hardinge has not returned to Zanzibar, and that there are matters which still remain to be discussed between him and the Sultan, I am unable at present to add anything to what I then said.

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF ASSIZE (MR. DARLING).

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Attorney General (1) whether it is usual to appoint, as a Special Commissioner of Assize to take the place of one of Her Majesty's Judges, for the adjudication of cases both criminal and civil, a Member of the House of Commons, and what are the precedents for this course; and (2) whether it is usual when a Queen's Counsel is appointed to take the place of one of Her Majesty's Judges as Commissioner of Assize on a circuit, to select a gentleman who is a practising barrister on that circuit, and what are the precedents for this course?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In reply to the first paragraph of the hon. and learned Member's question, it is not usual to appoint a Member of the House of Commons as a Special Commissioner of Assize, nor am I at present aware of any such appointment. As I understand that the hon. and learned Member has put this question in consequence of the fact that the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) acted as Commissioner for the Oxford Circuit, I think it right to say that he was not appointed a special Commissioner of Assize. All the Queen's Counsel practising on every circuit are included in the Commission of Assize, and, if necessary, are constantly asked to sit and assist Her Majesty's Judges in the discharge of business, both civil and criminal. I may mention here that 24 Members of this House were included in the Commissions of the last circuit, including the late Home Secretary, both the Law Officers of the Crown, the late Chairman of

Committees, and a number of other distinguished Members of the House. The name of the hon. and learned Member for Deptford was included in the Commission in the ordinary way, and he sat by virtue of that fact.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I think the hon. and learned Gentleman misunderstands the drift of my question. I want to know whether the hon. and learned Member for Deptford did not sit in substitution for one of the ordinary Judges of Assize, and not as an auxiliary, and whether he did not go the whole circuit as Judge of Assize?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. and learned Member for Deptford filled the place of second Judge, and he did a great deal more work than a Queen's Counsel has been called upon to do, but except in that sense he fulfilled no other function. I can scarcely say that he went in place of the learned Judge, because the Lord Chief Justice, who would have taken that circuit, actually transacted the business at Reading and Oxford. Subsequently to that the hon. and learned member for Deptford, without fee or reward of any sort or kind, undertook to fulfil the duties of the office. ["Hear, hear."]

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is there any precedent for a Member of the House of Commons going as Judge of Assize from town to town and coming back to the Lobby to vote?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: There are a number of precedents of Queen's Counsel, Members of this House, who have sat and have tried cases, both civil and criminal, on circuit, sometimes for two or three days together, and then returned to the Lobby to vote—that is if they did their duty. [*Laughter*].

SALE OF INTOXICANTS (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT).

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he has made inquiry into the conditions under which the sale of liquid is carried on within the precincts of the House, and is able to state to the House the results of his inquiry. The hon. Member, in putting the Question, pointed out that there was a misprint on the Paper. The word "liquid" should read "liquor." [*Laughter.*]

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: In accordance with the promise I gave to the hon. Baronet I have carefully looked into the matter, and have taken the best advice on the subject, and I have come to the conclusion that the sale of intoxicating liquors as at present carried on in the precincts of the House is not in accordance with the law. [*Loud laughter.*] I am, however, clearly of opinion that the provisions of the Licensing Acts cannot be applied, and are wholly unsuitable to the circumstances of the case. [*Renewed laughter.*] I am in communication with my right hon. Friends the Home Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to what steps had best be taken. My present opinion is that a short Act should be passed exempting the Houses of Parliament from the operation of the Licensing and Excise Laws. [*Laughter.*]

MR. LOGAN asked if the Government would find time this Session to pass that Act?

MR. BAYLEY desired to know whether, pending the passing of that Act, they were to be allowed to have liquors served.

[No answer was given.]

CATHEDRAL MAINTENANCE.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the national character of the cathedrals, the Government will consider the expediency of transferring the maintenance and repair of the fabrics from deans and chapters to Her Majesty's Board of Works, as is the case in Scotland?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No, I do not propose to ask the House to consider any proposal of the kind suggested by the hon. Member. [*Cheers.*]

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. R. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): On behalf of the hon. Member for Stirling Burghs (SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the termination of the inquiry into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, he can now state what course the Government proposes to adopt with regard to the case of Scotland?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am not at all surprised that the hon. Member who put the question, or the right hon. Gentleman who put it down on the paper, are interested in it, for the matter was constantly brought before them while they were in office by my hon. Friend the Member for Ayrshire. But the present Leader of the Opposition, in answer to a question in April 1894, said that the then Government were of opinion that the Scotch inquiry should not commence until the Irish one had terminated. As the House is aware, the Irish investigation has not, in the opinion of the Government, yet been brought to a conclusion —[*Opposition laughter*]—and we propose, as I said the other night, to appoint a Committee to conclude the labours left uncompleted by the Committee. I had perhaps better defer any answer as to the scope of the Committee until I am in a position to state the terms of reference to the House.

Dr. CLARK asked whether the Government intended to reappoint the Committee on the Financial Relations between the three kingdoms. It was appointed by them before, and it has never yet reported. It has only sat one day and has not been reappointed.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member should give notice of that question.

Mr. LOUGH: Arising out of the right hon. Gentleman's answer, I should like to put a question on another point. (*Laughter.*) I mean a point different from that raised by my hon. Friend. I desire to ask the Government whether it is in their discretion to state when the labours of a Royal Commission have finished, and not in the discretion of the Royal Commission itself.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.): The right hon. Gentleman referred to an answer which I gave, that the Scotch Commission should commence after the Committee on the Financial Relations of Ireland had reported. Does he mean that further inquiries are to be made by the same Committee to which I referred on that occasion?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I think, as I stated in my answer just now, any question with regard to the Committee had better be reserved until I can state the terms of reference.

SUPPLY.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeen E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he proposes to revive the Order of last Session with regard to the taking of Supply?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said he believed it would be in accordance with the views of the House generally that he should revive the order of last Session with regard to the taking of Supply.

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF ASSIZE.—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I would ask to be allowed, by the indulgence of the House, to offer a very short personal explanation arising out of a matter which has already been referred to. I do not desire to add anything to what has been said by the Attorney-General, but in consequence of the action taken by the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. MacNeill), many comments have appeared on the circumstances under which I accepted the office I lately held. Among others appeared this statement, to which I desire to call attention, in the *Daily News* of to-day:—

> "The statement we publish in another column, that Mr. Darling received no pay as a Commissioner because the Chancellor of the Exchequer refused it, is highly creditable to Sir Michael Hicks Beach as vigilant guardian of the public purse."

[*Laughter.*] All I desire to be allowed to say is that that statement is as untrue as it is offensive. [*Cheers.*] I say that no application was ever made to the Exchequer. The matter never came under the view of the Exchequer, for the simple reason that I expressly in writing stipulated that I should not be offered and should not take any kind of fee or reward whatever. [*Cheers.*]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Perhaps the House will allow me, in consequence of what has passed, to corroborate what the hon. and learned Member has stated. I hold a letter from the Lord Chancellor, requesting that the expenses of the hon. and learned Member should be paid, which was obviously intended not to include any fee. [" Hear, hear ! "]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (INTRODUCTION OF BILLS).

Ordered, That, To morrow, the Introduction of Bills have precedence of the Orders of the Day.—*(First Lord of the Treasury.)*

*MR. SPEAKER : May I ask the hon. Members, when they bring up notices of motions in order to hand them in, to put on them the number they have obtained in the ballot ? This will facilitate the labour of the clerks at the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.—THIRD DAY.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate, on Main Question [19th January], " That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth :—

Most Gracious Sovereign,—

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—*(Viscount Folkestone.)*

Question again proposed; Debate resumed :—

AGRICULTURE IN IRELAND.

Another Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words :—

" And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, combined with the disastrous character of the last season, has rendered it impossible for farmers in Ireland to pay their present rents without depriving themselves of the capital essential to the cultivation of their farms ; that the Land Act of last year has failed to provide any effective remedy for this condition of things, nine-tenths of the Irish tenantry being debarred from obtaining any present relief under its provisions ; that by the operation of the seventh section of the Act of 1887 and other exclusions large bodies of tenant farmers are debarred from all benefit under the Land Acts ; and that a state of extreme distress prevails in several districts in Ireland.

" And humbly to represent to Your Majesty that the condition of the agricultural population in Ireland demands the immediate attention of the Government with a view to comprehensive measures of relief."—*(Mr. Dillon.)*

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.) continued his speech in seconding Mr. Dillon's Amendment. He said he found ample evidence in his own constituency in support of the case put forward by his hon. Friend. Upon an estate of 50,000 acres with 2,000 tenants only fifty of the latter had been able to avail themselves of the Land Courts to get second judicial rents fixed. Although the Bill of last year was projected to bring relief to the tenant farmers of Ireland, he could say without fear of contradiction from the Chief Secretary or anyone else that that Act was a dead letter so far as giving present relief to the tenant farmers of Ireland was concerned. It was not a Bill for the future that was required but relief at the present time, considering that farmers had passed through two of the worst years since 1847. In the memory of the oldest inhabitants prices had never been so low in Ireland. He hoped that Ireland would not again be taught the lesson that her claims received no attention from the British Parliament unless they were supported by agitation. In 1888, when prices were not half so low as now, revisions of rent were granted. If ever there was a time for the generous interposition of the Government it was now. The matter was pressing in nearly every district. It was no Party question. It affected Unionist Members for Antrim and Fermanagh equally with Nationalist Members for Cork. In North Fermanagh in October, when, as any practical farmer knew, oats and hay should be in the hay yard, he saw hay with two feet of water over it, and the oat crop scattered over the ground. It was as essential for the Unionist Members for North Ireland as it was for the

Nationalist Members for any southern county. It was no Party question; it was a matter affecting the immediate relief of the poor unfortunate farmers of Ireland. To meet the great distress there were landlords who had given reductions of 40 per cent. on their rents, but there were other farmers who would not yield a cent, and were harassing the poor people with writs and processes. There was a large surplus in the Exchequer, and the time was opportune for the Government to be generous towards Ireland in her distress.

*MR. GEOFFREY DRAGE (Derby) said he wished to call the attention of the Government to the last clause of the Amendment. He did not think that this question of the housing of the agricultural classes in Ireland had been hitherto brought specifically before the House. It was a question which affected 54 per cent. of the adult population of Ireland, and 22 per cent. of the whole population. In a recent Blue Book it was said by a gentleman of the highest experience:—

> "It will probably, I think, be accepted as a fairly well-established position that in few, if any, of the countries with the affairs of which we are conversant, has the condition of the class of agricultural labourers, in regard to house accommodation, ever been known to sink to a lower level of general wretchedness than that very largely reached in Ireland in this respect, in even comparatively modern times."

This gentleman, Mr. O'Brien, an Assistant Commissioner, cited amongst other authorities the relieving officer of the Union of Naas, who said:—

> "The houses in Kilmeague, north and south, and Rathernan electoral divisions, are the worst I ever saw. Often I had to creep on hands and knees into them to give outdoor relief when their wives would be sick; they are built of bog sod and thatched; in some cases sodded on top instead of thatched."

Typical illustrations of these houses were given. One had one apartment measuring 10ft. by 8ft., with three adults and one child as inmates. Another had one room, 12ft. by 10ft., in which resided father, mother, and six children. A third had two rooms, 10ft. by 8ft., in which a father, mother, and five children lived. Another Assistant Commissioner, reporting in Ballymahon, gave it as his opinion that the house accommodation in that district was in many cases "simply vile," and referred to a cabin 11ft. by 9ft., with no chimney, furniture, or window, in which a man and his wife, and a woman and five children as lodgers lived. Another Assistant Commissioner, dealing with Westport, described the way in which the live stock lived in the same room with the family, and he went on to say that—

> "ill-constructed, badly repaired, and comfortless as were many of the cottages in the Westport Union, they cannot be compared in wretchedness to some of the miserable hovels inhabited by labourers in the comparatively small country towns of Castlereagh and Skibbereen."

Another Commissioner, comparing labourers' cottages in Ireland with those in England, said:—

> "Monmouth was by far the worst of the English Unions visited, and in describing what I had seen there I felt it my duty to draw attention to the lamentable condition of the cottages, and the absolutely joyless condition of the agricultural labourers. Were it possible to translate the Loughrea labourers into the Monmouth cottages, bad as they are, they ought to be happy."

So much then for the intensity of the evil. It was often said that the grievance of bad housing existed only in the congested districts, but there was ample proof that a disgraceful condition of things existed over the length and breadth of the land. In the Census returns, houses in Ireland were divided into four classes, the fourth class including all those which had one room and one window, and were built of mud or other perishable material. It was a terrible fact that 2.4 per cent. of all the houses in Ireland were to be found in that class. Some general improvement had no doubt been made, but it should be remembered that with the decrease of bad houses there had been a decrease in population, especially in the agricultural population. Further, the standard applied in classifying houses was relative, for a cottage had been described as fairly good for the habitation of a family containing only two rooms, the dimensions of which were only 14ft. by 14ft. It was true that the same laws applying to this matter existed in Ireland as existed in England, but the Local Authorities were either indifferent or incompetent, or there were other obstacles in the way of the law being carried out. The Agricultural Labourers' Acts had given power to the Local Authorities to rebuild cottages, but 99 per cent. of the cottages so rebuilt were in Leinster and Munster, and only 1 per cent. in the provinces of Ulster and Connaught. What was the reason for this small proportion in Ulster? It was contained in the words of an Ulster witness: "The farmers do not want to create a new order of labourers who would have the command of the situation." That was a fact which he thought required explanation, and it seemed that some further reform was necessary for the province of Ulster. In Connaught a reason was to be found in the local poverty. Delays were occasioned no doubt by the difficulty of borrowing money on favourable financial conditions, but not the least of the causes of delay had been shown to exist in connection with the Central Government in Dublin. Sometimes two years had been allowed to elapse from the inception of a scheme to the acquisition of sites. Complaints had also been made of favouritism in the selection of sites, of contractors, and of the labourers who occupied the cottages. He wished to ask the Government whether any improvement could be made, whether it would not be possible for some officer of the Local Government Board to make inquiries with a view to some general grant being made, or better terms for loans given, to enable the poorer Unions to build cottages, or for some such scheme as that proposed by the Recess Committee to be carried out. He was aware it was unusual for an hon. Member sitting on the Government side of the House to speak on the Address; but the hon. and learned Member who seconded it said that he felt certain that any member of the Unionist Party who was acquainted with evils under which Ireland laboured, would not only be willing to bring them before the House, but to advocate a remedy, and it was in that sense that he had brought these facts before the House. He thought a great responsibility rested on the Unionist Party in this respect. If there was one reform which the Party had attached more importance to than another, it was the improvement of the condition of the working classes, and it was one of their proudest boasts that they had done much to improve the housing of the working classes. He appealed to the Government to turn their attention to some practical method which would remove what he thought was a disgrace to this country and to civilisation; and he believed no better memorial to the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign could be raised than one that would bring some measure of comfort, some measure of the benefits the nineteenth century had conferred on England and Scotland, to the country which had been too long the Cinderella of the United Kingdom.

*MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) regarded it as a good omen for Ireland that Members from England and Scotland might be found to inquire into matters which affected the prosperity of Ireland. The fact went far to prove what the Unionist Party had declared on every platform, that this Imperial Parliament was willing to do every justice to Ireland, and to remedy every grievance. He hoped the hon. Member for East Mayo would be satisfied with the manner in which the question had been dealt with, and would not press it to a division. Undoubtedly, agriculture in Ireland in the last season had been greatly depressed, but it was only fair to the Government, which under such great difficulties passed the land legislation of last Session, to wait to hear what their proposals were regarding agricultural assistance towards Ireland referred to in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech. If the Government proceeded upon the lines recommended by the Recess Committee, of which he was a member, they might calculate upon the co-operation of the Irish people of all classes and creeds, but if they proposed merely to set up another Dublin Castle Board their efforts would be doomed to failure. With reference to the question of the better housing of labourers in Ireland, raised by the hon. Member for Derby, that country was at present groaning under the weight of taxation—especially local taxation—and this circumstance made Boards of Guardians most cautious as regards the passing of schemes for labourers' cottages, local taxation having already reached a point very little short of four millions—to be accurate, £3,842,000 per annum.

MR. DENIS KILBRIDE (Galway, N.) thanked the hon. Member for Derby for his kindly references to the position of Irish agricultural labourers. The reason why so many cottages had been built in Leinster and Munster was that there the majority of the Boards of Guardians were Nationalists, and the reason why so few had been built in Ulster and Connaught was that in the former the majority of the Guardians belonged to the political faith of the hon. Member for Derby, and that in the latter, agricultural labourers were not at all so numerous as in any of the other provinces; and the Boards of Guardians of that province who were mainly Nationalist were not to be condemned for the non-working of the Labourers' Acts. It had been pointed out that one of the great difficulties in the working of these Acts was the enormous legal expenses. His hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork had more than once introduced a Bill which would largely get rid of those enormous expenses, and he hoped that when the Bill was again introduced the hon. Member for Derby would, with his Unionist friends, support it by his vote in the Lobby. The Attorney General for Ireland had stated that the Local Government Board, through their inspectors and the district inspectors of constabulary, were looking after the distress in the West. He would suggest, however, that those responsible for the Government of Ireland should seek information from those who were more intimately in touch with the people than the officials referred to could possibly be. Notwithstanding the rather rosy description that the right hon. Gentleman gave of the condition of the people in Connaught, he could assure him that the potato crop in several of the congested districts in Connaught had been more seriously affected this year than in any other part of Ireland. It was a notorious fact, too, that these people, poor and miserable as they were, were nevertheless very slow to expose their poverty, and above all to resort to public relief. Notwithstanding the statement made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, he was not certain that the Government would not find themselves compelled, by the necessities of the situation, to legislate again this Session in regard to Irish land. The general condition in Ireland at present was worse than it had ever been before—worse than in 1879, though that was an extremely bad year. There was, it was true, no immediate danger of famine now, but ever since 1879 the prices of agricultural produce had been falling, and no one could say that they had yet touched bottom. The fall had been so great since 1879 that not only had the farmer lost the whole of the rent but 50 per cent. of the capital of which he was then possessed. The Government proposed to do nothing, because Ireland was peaceful. If the farmers were organised now as they were in 1879 the answer of the Attorney General for Ireland would have been very different. It was evident that if the tenant farmers were to be saved they must save themselves. Parliament had always neglected every class and interest in Ireland until it had made itself felt in an inconvenient way, and he hoped the hon. Member for East Mayo would go to a Division, as full-dress Debates alone would never extract anything from this Government or any other. The hon. Member for North Fermanagh, in proof of the assertion that this Parliament was willing and able to legislate for all classes in Ireland, referred to the proposed measure for setting up a Board of Agriculture in Ireland. But would a Board of Agriculture pay an excessive and unjust rent for the Irish farmer? That was the whole question. In 1896 the farmers of Ireland, not for the first time, were unable to pay the rent out of the produce of the land. That was proved by the statements made at public meetings in the North of Ireland, and even in the constituency of the Attorney General for Ireland. The rent was paid out of capital; and how long was such a state of things to continue? The shopkeepers were owed enormous sums by the farmers; and was it to be supposed that they would let their debts go, so that the landlords could take all the money that was left to the farmers? If the shopkeepers were to proceed as a body at the next Quarter Sessions in any county of Ireland, a general state of bankruptcy among the farmers would be brought about. Could the Attorney General for Ireland, or the hon. Member for North Fermanagh, or the hon. Member for South Tyrone, contradict that assertion in respect of their own constituencies? During the recess the hon. Member for South Tyrone had said that the time had arrived when the soil of Ireland could no longer support the three classes which now subsisted on it, and that one of those classes must go. If that were so, the class which ought to go should not be the farmers or the labourers, but the landlords, who were fewest in number and did least to aid the prosperity of the country. Undoubtedly the condition of some of the landlords was hard. They had inherited estates deeply mortgaged, and the landlords of the present day were suffering for the sins of their predecessors more than for their own. But was it reasonable to expect that the farmers and the landlords should take that suffering upon themselves? He should refuse to be a party to any transaction which would relieve the landlords at the expense of either the farmers or the labourers. The landlords had always acted in Ireland as the English garrison of the country, and if they were to be relieved he thought their relief should come out of the taxes of England. He could tell the House that the large grazing farmers in his constituency—men who farmed several hundreds of acres—were never in so bad a financial condition as they now were. The lands of most of these farmers were not sufficiently rich to be able to fatten the cattle into the required condition for the butcher. What the farmers did was to buy store cattle in the months of April and May, feed them during the summer and autumn, and then export them to be finished for the butcher on some of the large feeding farms in the counties of Forfarshire in Scotland and Norfolk in England. In connection with that matter he should express his gratitude to the Government for having last year prevented the farmers of Forfarshire and Norfolk from providing themselves with store cattle from Canada at the expense of his constituents in North Galway. The average profit derived from the cattle thus fattened was from 10s. to 25s. per head. Anyone acquainted with the condition of Irish agriculture knew that when large graziers had to be content with such a small profit out of cattle after six or eight months feeding it was a very serious matter for them indeed. Another matter was that the banks, which had for the last ten years given accommodation to the graziers in the large grazing districts of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, now refused to give the same amount of accommodation as in years past, and if they gave accommodation at all, they charged a much higher rate of interest, because they had become convinced that the same security offered by the farmers for the same money advanced was not now so good as it had been ten years ago. A higher percentage of interest charged to the grazier by the bank for the money needed to stock his farm, and a shrinkage in the profit from the sale of the cattle, would soon bring these large farmers to a state of ruin. From his knowledge of the different classes of farmers in three of the provinces of Ireland he declared that they were more depressed and closer to the brink of ruin than ever they had been since the year 1878. In view of these facts he asked the Government to seriously take into their consideration the present condition of the agricultural classes of Ireland, and to do something while there was yet time to prevent a general catastrophe in which every class that had any connection with farming in Ireland would be involved.

*MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.) said that the Irish Members in supporting the Amendment represented not only the Nationalists but also the Unionists of Ireland. It was now admitted on all sides in Ireland that the present judicial rents fixed from 1882 up to 1887 had, owing to the fall in the prices of agricultural produce, become rack rents. That fact had been admitted by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, a member of the Government, and, in his judgment, the only member of the Government who knew anything about the condition of the tenant farmers of Ireland. The Irish Law Officers of the Crown on the Treasury Bench opposite knew nothing about the condition of the agricultural classes in Ireland. Neither did the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and he (Mr. M'Hugh) saw little use in bringing forward arguments in that House if they were to be treated with the contempt and flippancy with which the right hon. Gentleman had treated the Report of the Financial Relations Commission recently at Manchester. He had said that the Irish Members represented in this matter the Unionists. Quite recently he attended a

Nationalist and Unionist meeting in his own constituency, called for the purpose of considering the agrarian question. That meeting was presided over by the ex-High Sheriff of the County of Leitrim, a gentleman who had opposed him at the General Election of 1892. A resolution was unanimously carried, calling upon the landlords of the district to give reductions in the rents now falling due proportionate to the fall which had taken place in the prices of agricultural produce; declaring that the Land Act of last year was of no practical value to that district, as it gave no immediate relief to the general body of the tenantry; calling for the introduction of a Measure this year amending the Land Acts in respect to judicial terms, arrears, pre-emption, and improvements made by tenants; and expressing the conviction that the Irish Land Question could not be satisfactorily settled until the sale of lands in the hands of the landlords was enforced by law. He told his constituents at that meeting that the Government would do nothing of the kind. They did not expect justice from the Government. They could only bring these matters before the House, and if the Government insisted upon doing nothing, and driving the people to exasperation, it was upon the heads of the Government that the guilt would rest. It was said in 1866 by the late Mr. John Bright, in Dublin, that nothing had ever been got from the House of Commons except by terror, and it was stated by the present Lord Chief Justice of England, Lord Russell, at the Parnell Commission, that all legislation came for Ireland when it was too late. He feared that the legislation demanded by the resolution of his constituents would not be given until it was too late, and that it was the intention of the present Ministry to retard that legislation until the people were driven to exasperation, or, perhaps, to crime. He did not think that sufficient attention had been given to the remarkable speech delivered by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board at Caledon on the 29th of October last. He should like to know whether the hon. Member for South Tyrone was going to take any part in the discussion that evening, or whether he had one voice for his constituents and another voice for the place he now occupied on the Treasury Bench. In that speech he said that there was not an article of produce sold by an Irish farmer which had not fallen in price, and while the price of produce had been falling the cost of production had gradually gone up. If the price of agricultural produce had been falling, the natural consequence should be that rents also should fall. The hon. Gentleman agreed that there was an extraordinary fall in the prices of wheat, potatoes, barley, flax, and other commodities, and said that the only produce of the farm which kept up its price was cattle. He should like to ask the hon. Gentleman why he made a statement of that kind without studying the facts. He had consulted a recognised authority, Thom's Almanac, which showed the prices of cattle at the great fair of Ballinasloe for the years 1882 and 1896. He found that in 1882 the number of cattle sold at that fair was 15,681; in 1896 it was only 11,506. In the class of oxen No. 1, in 1882 the price was £23; in 1896 it was £16; in Class 2 in 1882, £20; in 1896, £13 10s.; in Class 3 in 1882, £16; in 1896, £10 17s.6d.; in Class 4, in 1882 £13 10s.; in 1896, £9 10s. In heifers, Class 1, the price in 1882 was £23 10s.; in 1896, £15; in Class 2 in 1882, £20; in 1896, £12 12s. 6d.; in Class 3 in 1882, £17; in 1896, £10 12s. 6d.; in Class 4 in 1882, £15; and in 1896, £8 12s. 6d. The total prices of this class of cattle was in 1882 £148, and in 1896 £96 15s., showing a reduction of 34½ per cent. It was therefore necessary, in order to do justice to the tenant-farmers of Ireland, that they should have the opportunity of going at once into the Courts for the purpose of having the judicial rents revised, in view of this fall in prices. The hon. Member (Mr. Russell) referred to the Committee which was appointed under the late Government, and said that one of the main recommendations in its report, and one which he supported, was a reduction in the length of the judicial term. He said to his constituents that what was of vital importance was that the term now running should terminate at the end of ten years, the object being to bring immediate relief to those who had their rents fixed for 15 years. He should like to know whether the hon. Member for South

Tyrone still adhered to that opinion, and whether he would give the Government the benefit of his advice on the matter. He thought that if the hon. Member failed to come forward and state to the House the opinions to which he gave expression before his constituents, his constituents should call upon him to resign, because he would no longer represent them. They could not forget that the hon. Member for South Tyrone, although he represented an agricultural constituency, was also a placeman of the present Government, and had thought it necessary to tell his constituents not to be annoyed at the refusal of the Government to grant a reduction on the judicial term, because the difficulty of the judicial term would pass away in a year or two. Yes, but in a year or two thousands and thousands of the people of Ireland would also have passed away. [*Irish cheers.*] In his own county the population in 1841 was 155,297; at the last census it was 78,618; and the estimated population in 1895 was 72,000. The fire had gone out on no less than 10,417 hearthstones in the county of Leitrim, and it was the refusal of the English Government to deal with the pressing necessities of the situation in Ireland which rendered it impossible for prosperity to exist in that country. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Russell) delivered a speech in that House on the 21st March, 1888, in the course of which he said that by not dealing with the arrears of rent the tenants were absolutely deprived of the very legislation passed for their benefit, they were never allowed to go into Court, they were threatened and bullied by the agent before they went in, and these arrears were held over their heads in order to prevent them from going into Court to get a fair rent. Did the hon. Member, now that he was a placeman, still adhere to that statement? Or did he support the Government in its refusal to deal with the question of arrears? By the Crofters' Act the Crofters' Commission were empowered to deal with the question of arrears in the Highlands of Scotland, and he found from their report for 1894 that in the county of Argyll, where the total amount of arrears of tenant crofters was £235 18s. 1d., the Commissioners cancelled £146 18s. 2d., or 62.27 per cent. In Inverness the percentage of arrears cancelled was 62.75. Why should not the Government give to the Land Commission in Ireland power to deal with arrears similar to the power conferred upon the Crofters' Commission in the Highaldn's of Scotland? They must remember that all these arrears were, as a matter of fact, the residue of rack rents, and many men, who were now unable to get judicial rents fixed, were, by right and justice, the sole owners of the lands they occupied, because they had bought them out over and over again. The Land Act of last Session was entirely defective. It gave compensation for improvements made since 1850. But thousands, and perhaps millions, of capital were sunk by farm tenants prior to 1850 in improvements on farms which now their children occupied. Unless it could be clearly proved that the improvements were made at the expense of the landlord, it should be assumed that they were made by the tenant whether before or after 1850. In speaking of the right of the tenant to the value of his improvements, the late Mr. John Bright, speaking in this House in 1881, said—

> "If all the tenants have done were swept off the soil, and all the landlords have done were left upon it, the land would be as bare of houses and barns, fences and general cultivation as it was in prehistoric times. It would be as bare as the American prairie where the Indian now roams and where the white man has never trod."

That was the position of affairs in Ireland, and he was certain that the hon. Member for South Tyrone (who really knew something about this question of agriculture in Ireland) would thoroughly agree that the improvements before 1850 should be considered, until the contrary was proved, to be the work of the tenant in occupation. The Act of 1896, regarded as a settlement of the Irish Land Question, was a fraud and a sham. It afforded no relief to the vast majority of the judicial tenants. It was simply a makeshift, and unless the Government had no regard for social order in Ireland or the sufferings of the people, they would bring in a Bill to amend the Act. Irish Nationalists did not expect justice from the Government. But whether they expected it or not, they would demand it, and if the result of the apathy and callousness of the Government towards the suffering people of Ireland was to bring back the reign of crime in the country, upon their heads would be the blame. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. JOHN ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.), replying on behalf of the Government, said he would not follow the hon. Member for East Mayo into the many topics upon which he touched in his discursive speech. He would only mention them to put them aside. The hon. Member condemned the proposed Board of Agriculture, and, apparently, one of his reasons for so doing was that he assumed it would be founded on the Report of the Recess Committee and contaminated by the connection. It was but natural that, as he had been unmeasured in his condemnation of the Recess Committee, he should equally condemn by anticipation any Bill likely to be founded upon it.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.), said the hon. and learned Member was quite mistaken. He said he would give no opinion on the merits of the Bill. It might be one to which he could give his support.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND thought that, under the circumstances, the hon. Member might have reserved his criticisms until the Bill for establishing the Board of Agriculture was before the House, and it would be time enough then to see whether it was based on the recommendations of the Recess Committee or not. It was not his purpose or task to defend the Recess Committee or the recommendations it made; but he could not help saying that he thought the Committee had done great service in this—that it had laid before the public a mass of most useful information, and had endeavoured also to turn the minds of Irishmen aside from that perennial wrangle that went on as to the sharing of the diminished products of the Irish soil between landlord and tenant, to the more healthy object of endeavouring to increase the general output of agricultural production, enhance its value, and regain for Ireland the markets she had lost. He would not refer to the hon. Member's remarks on the Financial Relations Commission. A day had been promised on which there would be a full and ample discussion of the subject. The hon. Member for East Mayo congratulated himself upon the union that had taken place in Ireland amongst politicians of opposite schools. He did not know whether the hon. Member anticipated that the appeal to his allies to make a considerable reduction in their rents would have the effect of cementing or perpetuating that union. For himself he thought it would have the opposite effect. He would not dwell at any length on the question of the evicted tenants. It was debated last year on the Land Act. As the matter stood, it was but fair to say that under existing legislation every facility that could be given had been given towards the reconciliation and the reinstatement of the evicted tenants, except one, that public funds had not been advanced for the purpose. The House last year pronounced a definite decision on the propriety or advisability of making any such advance. But, although the advance had not been made, he was happy to think that negotiations had gone on, and in many cases had terminated successfully. Under the 13th Section of the Land Act of 1891 162 applications were sanctioned, and purchase money to the amount of £86,669 was advanced. Section 13 was re-enacted in the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Amendment Act, 1895, for a further period of six months. Under that re-enactment 186 applications were received, of which three were refused, 82 had been sanctioned, the purchase money being £39,585, and 101 applications were still pending. Under Section 47 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, 369 applications had been received from 127 different estates. In 183 of these cases objections had been received, two applications had been withdrawn, 45 had been refused, eight consents had been received, and 128 applications were still pending.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs) asked how many transactions had been carried through successfully.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND was understood to say there had been none, but there was every prospect of the Acts of last year leading, if not to an entire cure, to a great amelioration of the position.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) asked whether, in the 128 cases still pending, the time for objecting by the landlords had passed.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND replied that the return on the subject did not give that information. The hon. Member for East Mayo went on to describe the present condition of agriculture in Ireland as full of alarm and danger and said no Irish Member of Parliament would deny that there existed in Ireland a widespread feeling of alarm in regard to the agrarian situation. The hon. Member seemed to labour under an almost chronic apprehension of famine, because he said he had brought this question again and again before the House for the last 12 years, and he presumed he had prophesied that disasters were likely to follow. Happily, he had been a false prophet. When the hon. Member said the condition of Ireland was one that caused great alarm, he spoke incautiously. The organ of the party of Irish Nationalists who did not follow the hon. Member, but who, he would scarcely deny, had as thorough a knowledge of the condition of Ireland, and as warm a sympathy with Irish wrong and suffering as himself or any hon. Members who followed his leadership, dealt with this question in October 1896. *United Ireland*, referring to the "advocacy of famine" by the journal which represented the hon. Member's Party, said:

> "Considering the whole situation, as regards the crops, the outlook is not a good one, nor is it improved when the prices of cattle and other farm stock are taken into account. . . While we say this, however, we must strongly condemn the effort now being made by the organ of Whiggery to create a panic and to spread abroad the impression that a famine is threatened. This is the most reprehensible kind of nonsense, and what the object of those who are engineering the 'scare' can be we cannot form an idea. A partial failure of the crops and depressed prices no longer spell famine in Ireland, and the suggestion that 'processes, decrees, and evictions are the order of the day' is as silly an exaggeration as ever came from the same silly source. The credit of the merchants, shopkeepers, and farmers of Ireland was hardly ever better than it is now. Is it the object of the Whig organ to destroy that credit by proclaiming that the country is on the verge of famine?"

He thought he was right in assuming that whether the hon. Member for Mayo was right or wrong, he could not say that there was that identity of view between all members of the Irish National Party which the passage from his speech would lead the House to suppose. ["Hear, hear!"] The information in possession of the Government really amounted to this: Ireland, of course, during the past year had not escaped from the depression of agricultural prices that England had suffered, but there had been no such great decline in agricultural prices as some Members would seek to lead the House to believe. Taking all the articles given in the return from the Land Commission for 1896, there had been an increase in some of the products and a decrease in others—there being a decrease in nine and an increase in six. Three of the cases in which there was an increase were wheat, oats and butter, and there had also been an increase in the value of hay and wool and sheep and lambs. Although there had been a decrease in the prices of potatoes and pork, and other articles, it was by no means of such a high percentage as hon. Members had suggested. ["Hear, hear!"] In addition to that he found that, although the large farmers had suffered something by the decline in prices, the small farmers apparently had been better able to weather the storm. In the extreme West of Ireland, no doubt, there were districts where there was exceptional and sporadic distress, as was almost always the case; but these were cases which the ordinary administration of the Poor Law was entirely competent to meet and deal with. The officials of the Local Government Board, when the first symptoms manifested themselves, directed their personal attention to the matter, and if there was any necessity for any exceptional treatment the Government would be informed of it at the earliest possible moment. ["Hear, hear!"] He had also to mention that rents were seldom better paid than they had been during the past year, and that ejectments had been fewer than at any time during the last five years. The total number of ejectments or notices served last year was 4,773, as against 6,556 for 1893, and the number of actual evictions during 1896 was only 695. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for North Galway said that the rent was only paid out of capital, and at the same time he said that the condition of affairs in Ireland had been getting worse and worse every year for the last ten or twelve years. Certainly the Irish farmer must be a strange individual if year by year he could continue to pay rent out of capital, and yet, although prices were low, that the production should not diminish. This capital, like the cruse of oil, seemed to be inexhaustible, for it did not diminish, notwithstanding that year by year rent was paid out of it. The Government, therefore, did not recognise anything in the condition of Ireland which would induce them to depart from the conclusions which they had come to during the discussions on the Land Act of last year, either as to the treatment of the evicted tenants or as to shortening the duration of the judicial term. For reasons which were then deemed quite adequate the Government and the House determined that the term should not be shortened. Hon. Members must recollect that if they adopted an Act, like the Act of 1881, providing that rents must be fixed for a period, if that legislation was to have any meaning, rents could not be altered yearly as distress overtook tenants, unless by abatements made by the landlords. The hon. Member for Mayo had said that he repeated and reiterated his condemnation of the Land Act of last year, and he said that that Land Act was not a final settlement of all agrarian questions in Ireland. He did not think that it was ever suggested that it was a final settlement of all agrarian questions. If that was suggested it would be a strange thing, for this year in the Queen's Speech it was announced that a measure was to be introduced to create an Agricultural Board in Ireland, for the special purpose of applying itself to some of the agrarian questions of Ireland. The Land Act of last year purported to remove some of the objections and imperfections in the Act of 1881; it endeavoured to put the law in reference to tenants' improvements on a rational and more satisfactory footing; to bring within the letter of the Act of 1881 tenants that were within its spirit, but by the interpretation of its language had been held to be excluded from its letter. It also endeavoured to promote and give further facilities for purchase; it sought to increase the powers and strengthen the hands of the Congested Districts Board, and, despite the condemnation of the hon. Member for East Mayo, as far as he could read the signs of public opinion, it had succeeded in many of these objects to the satisfaction of hundreds of the tenantry of Ireland. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member went on to suggest that the only remedy for this condition of things was first of all a reduction, on a very large scale, of rents all over Ireland—with that he had already dealt. He next suggested, with regard to the congested districts, that there should be an extended scheme of migration put into force. He would remind the hon. Member that the only emigration scheme tried to any extent by any person but the Congested Districts Board was by no means a success, notwithstanding the glamour of Mr. Parnell's name. The Congested Districts Board had power to effect migration, and they had exercised these powers in two or three cases. They had bought Clare Island and another estate, to which they had transferred some of the tenantry from the more crowded districts. But they found that the price they would have to pay to buy land for the purpose of transferring tenants from other districts was so enormous that practically all their funds would be absorbed in carrying out this policy on any extended scale. Every facility was given the Congested Districts Board in this direction by the Land Act, for they were able to purchase land to the capitalised value of the sum yearly paid to them, and £1,500,000 was the capital they had now available for that purpose. The hon. Member referred to the Armagh cases. He had not, in the short interval that had elapsed between the time that speech was delivered and the present moment, been enabled to obtain information in reference to these cases, but even if the facts were exactly as the hon. Member stated, it was quite inevitable that as long as they had a Court of Appeal, if they added the number of dissentients in that Court to the number of persons whose decisions were under review, they might always get a majority against the view that ultimately prevailed. That obtained in every case. Say a Court consisted of three Judges and an appeal went from them to a Court of three Judges. If on the appeal one Judge agreed with the Court below and two of them disagreed, the opinion of the two would prevail. And yet it would be two Judges who would settle the law one way as against four who thought the law should be different. The Land Commission took the greatest care and trouble to select the men in whom they had the most confidence as being best able to perform the duties of Land Valuers, and, of course, they acted upon the evidence given before the Court in addition to the evidence of the valuer. The hon. Member for Derby had expressed the hope that the Government would bring in a Bill to deal with the housing of the agricultural labourers. He would remind the hon. Member that it was the Government of 1891 that brought in a Bill enabling the Local Government Board to supersede local guardians, who were obstinate and would not put into operation the beneficial legislation embodied in the Labourers Acts. Then, again, the Act of last year was passed by which the machinery of the Labourers Acts was made to work more smoothly, more expeditiously, and more economically. The hon. Member who had just sat down had referred again and again to what he said was the effect of the Act of last year in preventing a tenant who was in arrear with his rent from going into Court and having a fair rent fixed. He confessed that he was unable to follow the hon. Gentleman in the conclusion at which he had arrived upon that point, because, in his view, a tenant, however much in arrear, might go into Court and have a fair rent fixed. ["Hear, hear!"] Under that Act it was perfectly useless for a landlord to go into Court with the idea that he could obtain a decree of ejectment merely because his tenant was in arrear with his rent. It appeared to him, therefore, that the complaint of the hon. Member was really unfounded, and that there was nothing to prevent the tenant from taking advantage of the provisions of the Act of 1881 as amended by the subsequent Irish Land Acts. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that, having made that statement, he had said all that was necessary upon the subject. Therefore, notwithstanding the observations of the hon. Member, he hoped that the efforts which the present Irish Government were making, and were making sincerely to promote the peace, happiness, and progress of Ireland, would not be cursed with the disaster which the hon. Gentleman had foretold they would result in. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said he thought it would be a lamentable thing if the House were to remain under the impression that the Irish tenants, or Irish people generally, were satisfied with the Land Act of last year, and, therefore, he hoped the hon. Member for East Mayo would not yield to the appeals made to him not to press his Amendment to a division. The feeling in Ireland with regard to the Land Act was not confined to any particular class, and it was of general and intense disappointment. He did not believe the Attorney General for Ireland had answered the arguments of the hon. Member for East Mayo. He had not been able to show that in point of fact the condition of the tenantry of Ireland had been bettered by the legislation of last Session. ["Hear, hear!"] It was absolutely necessary that the House should record its opinion upon this question, and to show that hon. Members sympathised with what was conceded to be the case, that the prospects of the farmers of Ireland this year and last winter were worse than they had been for many preceding years. He confessed that he thought it was hardly reasonable of the Attorney General to try and throw the apple of discord among Members on the Opposition side of the House by referring to an article which appeared in *United Ireland* as far back as last October, before the result of the harvest could be sufficiently known, and before it could be ascertained whether it was or was not to be a year of distress. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government had to admit the fact that agricultural produce and the price of produce had both fallen in a tremendous degree. ["Hear, hear!"] What he found fault with in the gracious Speech from the Throne was that there was no reference to remedial measures for Ireland, except the reference to an Agricultural Board, which he supposed was intended to be one of those sops and doles which had been occasionally thrown out to satisfy the starving people. ["Hear, hear!"] The Land Act of last year could not be regarded as a final Measure, and never would be. It was no answer to the state of things in Ireland for the Attorney General to talk of a perennial wrangle going on in the

House with regard to the wrongs of Ireland. A starving and impoverished people must always raise their voices in an assembly from which they hoped to get justice, and that voice could not be silenced by a jibe or a sneer at a perennial wrangle. ["Hear, hear!"] What did the case of the Government come to on this subject? The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland said that the provisions of the Evicted Tenants Act had been successful. But he had only shown in the case of 127 estates 45 proposals were refused, and that in eight cases only the landlords had given their consent to them. Did the right hon. Gentleman rely upon those figures as proof of the successful operation of the Act? ["Hear, hear!"] He said he thought that when his right hon. and learned Friend saw that figure 8 he would have crumpled up the paper and thrown it aside rather than have called the attention of the House to it. With regard to the remaining 128 the Attorney General did not know whether the time had elapsed or not for the landlord to state whether he objected or otherwise. So far as the evicted clauses went the allegation of the hon. Gentleman below the gangway had been fully sustained. What were the other figures relied upon by the Attorney General? Of 15 articles of agricultural produce he saw the price of nine had decreased, and of six increased. If the price of nine articles of produce had decreased how could the tenant be expected to pay the old rent. Amongst the six articles was wheat, and wheat was a crop on which the tenants in Ireland never had relied and never would or could rely. The hon. Members for North Galway and North Leitrim, who had lately addressed the House, were practical farmers, and they had declared from bitter experience that it was impossible to make anything like a reasonable rent out of the land in the face of the existing prices. His right hon. and learned Friend had told the House that rents were being well paid. What evidence did he rely upon? There were no returns showing how rents had been paid, this or any other winter. He had had the opportunity lately of speaking with many people in Ireland, and he believed it was a mistake to suppose that rents were being well paid. That was not from any fault on the part of the tenant, but simply because the times were too hard to enable the men to pay their rents. The Irish tenants had for a long time tried to drag out a wretched existence on soil the produce of which left them nothing to subsist upon if they met the exactions of their landlords. Ireland had been over-rented for years. It still was over-rented, and the only possible means of remedying matters was sternly refused by the Government and the House last year, when they rejected the Amendment by which rents could have been revised every ten years. Would the hon. Member for South Tyrone tell the House that the farmers of Tyrone were satisfied with the present state of things? Would he tell the House that those men were satisfied to languish year after year under a rent which it was impossible for them to pay? The hon. Member argued that rents could be revised in two, three, or four years. Yes, but in the meantime the tenants might have emigrated or died in their wretched holdings. There never was a greater mistake committed by any Government than that committed by the present Government when they refused the Amendment to allow rents to be revised every ten years. With regard to the Congested Districts Act, the Attorney General's figures were equally unsatisfactory. His right hon. and learned Friend admitted that the clauses of that Act had only been applied with any degree of success in two or three cases. What could demonstrate more plainly the failure of that legislation than such a statement? It was quite true the fact of there being arrears did not prevent a rent being fixed, but the fact of there being arrears was taken into account in measuring the rent when there was a question of purchase. Then his right hon. and learned Friend seemed to think the 7th Section of the Act of 1887 was not a subject of complaint. That clause was known throughout Ireland as the eviction-made-easy clause. The poison of it was that if a man was evicted for non-payment of rent and re-admitted as caretaker, he was debarred from the benefit of the Land Act; he was in the position of a future tenant, and could not have his rent revised. These were reasons why he trusted the hon. Member for East Mayo would press his Amendment to a Division. By dividing they would show that there were Irish, Scotch and English Members who sympathised with the tenants of Ireland, and who still held out the hope that their sad position might at no very distant date be changed.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) thought the most momentous event in Ireland during the recess was the judgment of Mr. Justice Bewley in respect to the agrarian situation. Mr. Justice Bewley declared at Belfast, on his responsibility as the Chief Judicial Commissioner, that the whole of the rents which were fixed in Ireland during the first four years were fixed upon wholly wrong principles; in other words, that an error of judgment had been committed by the Land Commission in at least 200,000 cases. No graver statement had ever fallen from the lips of a judicial functionary. Mr. Justice Bewley pointed out that there had been good times up to 1881, when the Land Act of that year was passed, and that naturally the Sub-Commissioners during 1881-2-3-4 went on the basis that the 15 subsequent years would in all probability be of as satisfactory a character as the 15 past years. Judge Bewley's words were not delivered in a corner, and, affecting as they did 200,000 families, anyone in the position of an Irish Member was well founded in taking his stand upon that remarkable judgment. He thought they might very strongly found themselves on this authority in their demand for a shortening of the judicial term. But while he said that he did not intend for one moment to recede from the position he had taken up as to the Land Bill of last year. He would say again now what he said then—that he thought that Bill, as far as it went, was an excellent measure, and he had no hesitation in repeating that night his thanks to the Government for their firmness and courage in passing it. At the same time, that did not prevent him in any degree from pressing for further reform in the matter, especially as the learned Attorney General for Ireland had declared—what, of course, they knew to be the fact—that the Bill of last year was not put forward with any pretence to be a final settlement of the Land Question. But he thought the Government, if they were well advised, would hesitate to commit themselves finally to the position which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had assumed that night. Let them take the case of Scotland. The Crofter Commissioners were going about making reductions of rent under the Act which was passed for only seven years, and yet the landlords were not up in arms, and no one of them thought of rebelling against the Government in consequence. But he thought a remedy might at once be applied to agricultural difficulty in Ireland without any injustice being done to the landlords, and even without an immediate shortening of the judicial terms. In the first place, there was the amount of over-taxation wrongfully wrung out of Ireland to the extent of between two and three millions a year, as reported by the Financial Relations Commission, and that amount, which, for one year, was more than had been won by the tenants of Ireland by the seething agitation of the last 15 or 16 years, would have to be dealt with. He would also suggest to the Government that if they were unable in the present Session to shorten the judicial term to 10 years, they might do for Ireland what they did last year for England and Scotland—give her an Agricultural Rates Bill, reducing the rates of the farmer by one-half. ["Hear, hear!"] That would of itself be a very substantial relief and benefit to the tenantry of Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] There was another point which very closely affected the question of the shortening of the judicial term—the class of men who were appointed as Sub Commissioners under the Land Commission, and who had to fix the judicial rents. He found that no fewer than 24 new appointments had recently been made—some as temporary and some as permanent Commissioners; and he confessed that he much regretted the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not present to explain the mode in which those appointments were made. He had gone through the list of those gentlemen, and he found that only four of them were Catholics—four out of 24. He had no desire to raise any feelings of religious prejudice, but it was an extraordinary fact to start with that in a country where the Catholics and Protestants were as 4 to 1——

*MR. SPEAKER called the hon. and learned Member to order, on the ground that he was travelling beyond the scope of the Amendment.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he was going to show that, almost without exception, the Sub-Commissioners were drawn from the landlord class, and that therefore most of them were Protestants, and they were debarred from having that sympathy with agricultural distress and interests which they would have if more fairly or impartially chosen. [*Cheers.*] He repeated that he should like to have some explanation as to how the recent appointments were made—whether they were made in consultation with, and with the sanction of, the Land Commission, or were they made by the Chief Secretary and the Lord Lieutenant off-hand without consultation? Three or four of them he recognised as well-known agriculturists—very good appointments; but he should like to know the principle on which many of the other gentlemen were appointed. He should like to refer to a few of the names. First, there was Mr. Small, who, as far as he knew, was a former landlord in a small way, nominated, he believed, by the hon. Member for Mid Armagh. Then there was—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. and learned Member is really going too far in entering upon these matters. They do not apply at all to the question of the Amendment. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he would not, of course, pursue the point if the Speaker ruled it to be irregular, but he felt bound to say that he thought the consideration of the personnel of the Land Commission entered very largely into the question of the fair administration of the Land Acts. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to another point that had been brought under the notice of the House—namely, the question of what was called the "Eviction-made-easy Clause"—his views of that 7th Clause was this—that, like every other bad thing, it was a curse to both sides. It had proved a curse to the landlords, for it had prompted them to take steps against their tenants which they would not otherwise have done, and it had inflicted injury on numbers of tenants. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said there had been less than 700 actual evictions this year, and that about 4,000 notices had been served on tenants, by means of which, under process of law, the landlord sought to deprive the tenant of his property—of his status as a tenant, and of his interest in the soil—without proceeding to actual eviction. The right hon. and learned Gentleman regarded these figures as a small average, but he regarded them as a very large sum of one year's evil work under this clause. Taking every year since 1887, and a yearly average of 4,000 persons not dispossessed, but whose tenancies and tenures had been destroyed and whose improvements had been confiscated, they arrived at the fact, which he thought was beyond dispute, that in 40,000 cases at least tenants who had been made present tenants by Mr. Gladstone in 1881, were now in the miserable and precarious position of future tenancies. He believed the inevitable result of that state of things must be that they were simply preparing for themselves the materials of some great future Land Act. As for himself, he would say that he had looked with satisfaction upon the growth of this union between landlords and tenants upon the same platform in the hope that reforms outside and beyond those relating merely to financial questions would accrue from it. He believed that if the landlords were wise they would find the people of Ireland at the present moment in a mood and temper to come to terms with them upon this great question of agrarian disturbances. He believed the people of Ireland, taking them as a whole, would welcome a settlement by which, on the tenant's becoming the owner of his farm at a fair price, something like compensation, either for disturbance or for compulsory expropriation, should be paid to the Irish landlords. ["Hear, hear!"] And they did not want the money to come out of John Bull's pocket. They were quite willing to pay their own money for it if they would give them charge of their own money. The Irish landlords should understand that that was the temper that prevailed among the people, and he trusted that while this spirit continued the landlords, who after all were Irishmen—and he thought he might say every Irishman was an Irishman unless he was a Belfast Liberal Unionist—[*laughter*]—would take advantage of it. They would find it far easier to make better terms and conditions with their own people by friendly arrangement than they were ever likely to get by combat across the floor of the House. He read with some amazement the attacks on the Government last year. The landlords met in convention in Galway, in Cork, in Dublin, and in various other places, and poured out the vials of their wrath on the Government for having passed so iniquitous a Land Act. His own view of the legislation of last year was that it had yet to be tested by results. Its result so far had been that it had given them the most peaceable winter they had ever had in Ireland. [" Hear, hear ! "] He should be glad to see the Government proceed in regard to the remaining questions outstanding upon this Land Question and upon every Irish question. He believed they would find the time and the temper of the people favourable. He thought they had now, at this moment, an opportunity which was perhaps not likely to recur. The landlords themselves were coming to realise that they could no longer expect the enormous rents they had hitherto been exacting. At the same time they have the claim that they were put there as their garrison, and the Government could not desert them. Accordingly he thought the present opportunity was a favourable one for statesmen to heal up this question by doing justice alike both to the proprietor and to the tiller of the soil. [" Hear, hear ! "]

MR. J. J. CLANCY said that, though he did not agree with all the statements of the hon. Member for East Mayo, he thought there was ample ground for the Amendment, and if it was pressed to a Division he should certainly vote for it. He thought the Government could not be surprised that such an Amendment should be proposed. The Attorney General for Ireland, although he affected to make light of the agricultural depression in Ireland, must feel that that depression was a real and genuine thing. He thought there was an admission of that fact when he stated, and reading from Returns which had been placed before him, that there had been a decline of value in several of the main articles of agricultural produce. If there had been this decline he thought it must be manifest to the right hon. Gentleman and to everybody else that there was a serious agricultural depression, and one thing which made the decline of last year more serious than it would have been under ordinary circumstances was that it came on the top of several other declines. He thought the Government could not be surprised at the Amendment for another reason. He supported their Land Bill of last year, and, like the hon. Member for Louth, he had not one single word to retract or to alter that he spoke in regard to that Bill. He regarded that Bill as a series of very useful, but very small reforms, which, taken together, constituted such a reform as, in his opinion, it would have been absurd and foolish on the part of Irish representatives to reject. Although he took that view and voted for the Bill, still he had always held that it was deficient in two or three matters of the most serious and vital importance to the tenantry of Ireland, and that being so it could not be regarded as a sufficient remedy for the evils which it was intended to meet. He now came to ask, what were the Government going to do? They admitted that something more was necessary by stating in the Queen's Speech that a Bill for the establishment of a Board of Agriculture would be proposed during this Session. He had not the least hesitation in saying that if the proposed Bill proceeded on the lines indicated in the Report of the Recess Committee it would have his hearty support. He had always been astonished at the attacks on the Report of the Recess Committee. That Committee actually made proposals which the Nationalists had been making for ten years and making in vain, and really, when he was now called upon to censure these proposals when they were put forward by a Committee representative of every shade of public opinion in Ireland, he was astonished, especially when the request came to him from the representatives of Nationalist opinion. He hoped the coming Bill would proceed on the lines of the Report of the Recess Committee. It would certainly be unsatisfactory if it did not fulfil two conditions. For the limited objects it was to serve, the Board to be set up should be a popular body. If this Board was to be simply an addition to the already long list of Boards which go to make up what was called "Dublin Castle" in Ireland, free from and independent of public opinion in Ireland, then he assured the right hon. Gentleman that it would fail like other Boards to conciliate Irish opinion and to do effective work in the service of Ireland. In the second place if this Board be not amply endowed with funds to do real, effective, genuine work in promoting the agricultural prosperity of Ireland, then he really thought the right hon. Gentleman had better stay his hand altogether. ["Hear, hear!"] He admitted that he could not set up any effective instrument for restoring agricultural prosperity to Ireland. Even if this Bill passed, even if the Board were satisfactory in these two respects, the Government must be aware, in fact everybody in Ireland was aware, that this measure alone would not meet the necessities of the case. Agricultural depression in Ireland was a real and genuine evil to be met, and which in the interests of order and from the point of view of English government in Ireland, must be met by adequate remedy. His own opinion was that before many years passed, within a very few Sessions, a Minister would come to the House and propose—perhaps too late for some of its purposes—a Bill containing the very proposals Irish Members unsuccessfully submitted last year for the shortening of the statutory term, for including future tenants within the scope of the rent-fixing clauses, and, if there were any tenants remaining outside, would certainly renew the proposals for facilitating their restoration made by the Duke of Devonshire and the Secretary for the Colonies the year before last. More than that would be wanted to settle the Irish Land Question. He was astonished that any representative of tenant opinion could consider the Land Act of last year a final settlement. Nobody ever said it, and he doubted if anybody thought it. Something much more drastic than a reduction of the statutory term, than the inclusion of future tenants within the rent-fixing provisions of the Act, or even the restoration of evicted tenants to their homes, would be required to settle the question. He looked for a settlement in the direction of purchase. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed it would be necessary to largely increase the facilities for purchase which were already provided, and which he admitted had been increased by the Act of last year. It would be said that landlords would lose by all these further changes in the law, and this would be made ground for opposition. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had made some remarks on this subject and the remedy which should be applied with which he entirely concurred. He believed that the Irish people were not the enemies of the landlords except in so far as the landlords have unfortunately their place in a system which became infamous. There were landlords in Ireland who had availed themselves of the system to rob their tenantry for generations, but there was another section of landlords who had not availed themselves of the system, and who had acted without any very great injustice. With regard to both classes, if they appealed to the English Government—which put them in Ireland, which passed laws enabling them to rob their tenants, and subsequently passed laws enabling tenants to get back some parts of their rights—if they appealed to the English Government as responsible for their position past and present to reverse them, then he and his friends would not be found opposing that appeal. He did not indicate the manner in which they might get relief, but one method suggested itself to his mind. He believed there was a large sum due to Ireland by reason of over taxation of the country in the past, and which continued at the present time, and he had himself said at the great meeting in the Mansion House in Dublin that if the result of the agitation be to obtain for Ireland any great measure of relief, then he hoped that that relief would be shared by every class of the Irish community—landlords, tenants, labourers, merchants, shopkeepers—all alike. That declaration he repeated. He would not advocate relief from this over-taxation passing to one class only of the Irish population; every class in Ireland should share in that relief, and he should certainly not object to landlords receiving their fair share. As illustrating the facts stated by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. T. M. Healy), he mentioned that the other day one of the most influential of his own constituents, a gentleman who had found fault with his action in support of the

Bill of last year, and who had said in public that the duty of Irish Members was to oppose that Bill because it did not go far enough—actually this same gentleman proposed at a public meeting to devote sixty millions, which he thought Ireland might be able to get in respect to the over-taxation, to making up the difference between what the landlords wanted for their land and what the tenants were able to give for it.

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): Was he sane? [*Laughter.*]

MR. CLANCY said the hon. Member's acquaintance with Mr. Andrew Kettle should enable him to answer that question.

MR. DAVITT said the name being mentioned, he would wish to withdraw his remark.

MR. CLANCY said he would not go so far as Mr. Kettle. He did not adopt that suggestion, he only mentioned the circumstance that when an extreme advocate of tenant rights, who denounced the Bill of last year as not going far enough—a prominent Land Leaguer—ventured on such a suggestion to ease the situation between landlords and tenants, it was evidence in support of the statements of his hon. and learned Friend. The state of feeling between landlords and tenants in Ireland was such as to afford a hope that if the Government, which insisted on managing Irish affairs, would take Irish advice, matters might be settled to the satisfaction of everybody in a few weeks. Although the Government no doubt would vote down this Amendment, yet he was as confident as he was of his own existence that the time would come when a Bill embodying proposals indicated would be proposed and carried, and with profit the Government might reflect whether it was not expedient, in the interest of justice and order in Ireland, to depart from the practice of past years and not wait until they were forced to yield to the pressure of events. ["Hear!"]

MR. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.) said that the Attorney General for Ireland had denied that there was any substantial fall in prices, and had mentioned two commodities of which the prices, he said, had risen, namely, wheat and hay. In his opinion it was a mockery to tell any farmer in Ireland that because there was an increase in the price of wheat and hay the complaint about agricultural depression ought no longer to be made. What were the facts? In three-fourths of Ireland no wheat had been grown for many years, and any increase in the price of hay meant an increase of expenditure in keep for the ordinary farmer. It was therefore a disadvantage to him. He thought that if the hon. Member for South Tyrone had spoken instead of the Attorney General, his speech would have been more sympathetic, for the hon. Member for South Tyrone understood the Irish Land Question. When the Nationalist Members declared last year that the Land Bill of 1896 only touched the fringe of the trouble, they were told that hon. Members opposite knew more about the wants of Ireland than they did. But now the Nationalist Members had to tell the Government that up to the present the Act had been a failure, and had brought no relief to nine-tenths of the tenant farmers. The cases of reduction of judicial rents were isolated instances, and whilst the Act had brought relief to a few men only, it had done serious injury to a large number of tenants who owed trifling arrears of rent. In the last few weeks, in the county in which he lived, many processes had been served for two years' rent, one year's rent, and even for half a year's rent, the landlords having been spurred on to take that course by the clause of the Act which said that no landlord should recover more than a year's rent after a certain period. The landlords had thus been set on to obtain from tenants trifling arrears. What was the real cause of the fall in agricultural prices in Ireland? The cause was the Free Trade policy which Parliament had imposed upon the people of Ireland. That policy had brought untold wealth to England, but ruin to Ireland's national industry. It had been said by the hon. Member for North Fermanagh that the supporters of the Amendment ought not to proceed to a Division because Ireland had been promised a Board of Agriculture. For his part he had no great faith in the efficacy of a Board of that kind. In the first place, its establishment would create a new regiment of officials, and supply profitable situations for needy Unionists in various parts of the country. In spite of the existence of a Board of Agriculture in England, they had been told time after time that the agricultural industry was ruined in this country. Had the Board of Agriculture been able to remedy the depression in Essex, where they were told there were many square miles of vacant land? How could Irishmen expect, with that example before them, that a Board of Agriculture would remedy the present desperate state of things in their country, where the people had to contend with falling prices and markets, and where farmers could not find buyers for their sheep and cattle? Under the Agricultural Rates Act of last year, half the English farmer's local rates were paid for him. Was the Irish farmer going to receive similar or analogous relief? The Nationalist and Unionist farmers of Ireland would be intensely disappointed when they realised that the Government had no remedy to offer for the alleviation of their misfortunes.

Mr. GEORGE MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid.), contended that the figures quoted by the Attorney General for Ireland did not correctly represent the present prices in the markets of Ulster. For example, the right hon. Member's figures for oats were considerably too high, and in Ulster potatoes were almost unsaleable. He had not met any farmer in Ulster who admitted that the Land Bill of 1896 conferred any benefit upon him. The cases in which it had brought relief were very exceptional. At a meeting in Belfast held under the auspices of the Liberal Land Committee of Ulster, the following resolution had been passed:

> "That the decision of Judge Bewley to exclude hundreds of tenants who served originating notices during the first sitting of the Court in 1881, but whose cases were not recorded, from now having judicial rents revised, is further proof of the continued interpretation of the law in nearly every case in favour of the landlords.
>
> "That we regard it as a grave injustice that tenants not under the Ulster custom should be rented on their own improvements merely because the improvements were made in pursuance of a clause in an ancient lease, as decided under the Act of 1896 by Mr. Commissioner Bewley at Portadown on 3rd November."

There could be no doubt that the prices which the farmers received for their goods were very small, whilst their rents were very high. It was almost impossible for them to be just and honest men in the circumstances. The Chief Secretary a short time ago admitted that the rents fixed in 1881 and for some years thereafter were at present impossible. But those were the rents which had to be paid by the tenant-farmers, and which they would have to continue to pay for four or five years. What was the use, therefore, of the hon. Member for South Tyrone urging that these things would right themselves in course of time? Everything would right itself in course of time; the hungry man would not feel hunger in the course of time; but what the Irish Members asked was that the Government should see justice done between man and man, because the tenant and the landlord were partners in the working of the soil. Ireland occupied its present position owing to the action of the House of Commons. The abolition of the Corn Laws, though in the main beneficial, had struck a blow at Irish agriculture which it had never recovered. While it had brought prosperity to England it had made Ireland poor, had depopulated the country, and had left it to-day in a most abject condition. The House of Commons therefore owed a debt of restitution to the cultivators of the soil, and certainly the last word of the Attorney General for Ireland would neither give satisfaction to the Irish people, nor be the last one uttered on the subject.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he had always advocated the creation of a Board of Agriculture for Ireland, because he maintained that it would be for the benefit of the Irish tenant farmers to have placed at their disposal improved means of production, and to be raised to the level of foreign nations. It was said that the English Board of Agriculture had conferred those advantages, but he thought that that Board was a hundred years behind the Boards of other countries—an opinion in which he thought the President of the Board of Agriculture would agree with him. The amount of money and the number of staff at the disposal of the President compared with the Boards of other countries was simply ridiculous. The English Board could not enter into serious competition with the foreign Boards of Agriculture. He trusted that the Government therefore would fully equip the new Board with an endowment capable of carrying on its work in an efficient manner. He would oppose the introduction of the measure unless it was founded and carried on in a different way from the Board which at present existed in Ireland. In Ireland they wanted a popularly constituted Board, not an irresponsible, non-elective bureaucracy. He voted for the Land Act of last year because Ireland could not obtain a better measure, not because he approved it; but at the same time this did not prevent the Irish Members from endeavouring to extract a better measure for the Irish tenants than the Government were inclined to give last Session.

*MR. P. C. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.) said that lest his silence should be misunderstood by his constituents he wished to add his voice to the voices of previous speakers, and to assure the House in the most emphatic manner that although he lived in the midst of a Unionist constituency, he had not met a farmer who had expressed anything but the most intense dissatisfaction with the Land Act of last year. He had reason to know that a determined effort was being made on the part of the landlords to destroy the Ulster tenant right in every case they could. He knew farmers who had been paying rack rents all their lives, and he quoted the case of a town-land property in which an instance of free sale had not occurred because the tenants had always been evicted. The present occupiers in this town-land, when they went into Court, were unable to establish the Ulster custom, and hence they were rented upon their own improvements. The condition of three-fourths of the population of Ireland was most wretched and miserable at the present time. Throughout the district of Ulster where he came from he never remembered a time of greater distress. What with low prices, the desperate struggle to get money, and unfeeling treatment from landlords in exacting their full rents, the life of the agricultural population was one of much poverty and hardship. About his part of the country the small farmers had lost nearly all their hay by the incessant rains of August last. Some of these people were now going into the market to buy hay, and the enhanced price at which alone it could be procured was another of the causes which would make it more and more difficult for the farmers to pay their rents. The learned Attorney General quoted the rise in the price of hay as a benefit to farmers, whereas it was quite the reverse. Wheat also had risen, but scarcely any is grown in Ulster. The cost of labour was so high that a great deal of the land was going out of cultivation. The children were being kept from school, with the inevitable result that they would grow up to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water." Under all these circumstances he thought there should be a statutory reduction of rent for three years, to enable them to pull through pending the time which must elapse before they could have a second judicial rent fixed.

MR. MICHAEL McCARTAN (Down, S.) said the speech of the Attorney-General for Ireland avoided every vital part of the argument of the hon. Member for Mayo. The right hon. Gentleman had culled some statistics about the price of produce, but he only mentioned the price of one article, and that was wheat. Surely every hon. Member knew that wheat was but a trivial crop in Ireland. There were some counties where probably no wheat was grown at all; he knew of no county where it was the substantial crop of the farmer. He had been told last Session by the Chief Secretary that large reductions had been given by landlords in the north of Ireland on account of the terrible failure of the flax crop. Time after time he had tried to get a statement from the Chief Secretary as to the estates on which such reductions had been made, but he had always been refused the information. That being so he had been driven to make inquiries on his own account, and he could not find that on one single large estate had any substantial reduction been allowed. He could not help thinking, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman had been unconsciously misled. They had been told to-night that rents were being well paid, and that never were there fewer ejectments. The Irish tenant-farmer would beg and borrow and pawn his last acre of land for the purpose of retaining his home, and were they to be told that their only chance of relief was to take the law into their own hands? Had they not done so in 1881 they would never have had the Land Act, and he presumed the lesson now to be taught them was that if they did not do so again they would never get the justice to which they were entitled. He never remembered a time when there was so much discontent in Ulster. Through the agricultural depression indeed things were getting into a dangerous state. If outbursts of despair were witnessed in the near future, he hoped the Government would not forget that they had been warned. The right hon. Gentleman knew that the flax crop had been a terrible failure. There were cases where the farmer was not able to pay for the seed out of the crop reared from it. There were large numbers of the tenants who were still kept out of the Courts by the congestion of business, though the rack rents were admitted to be impossible. And yet the Government had no remedy whatever. As to the plea that suitable men could not be found for increasing the number of the Sub-Commissioners of the Land Court, he would undertake to find the requisite number in his own county alone. He felt that he would have been wrong to give a silent vote on this question; for all over the north of Ireland he had found nothing but discontent with the present situation, discontent with the recent Land Act, and a determination to get justice at any cost.

On the return of Mr. Speaker after the usual interval,

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) said he regretted the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because he thought they would have received from him a somewhat more favourable consideration than they had received from the Attorney General for Ireland, whose reply had been extremely unsatisfactory. In the 17th century the English traders moved the English Parliament to repress industries in Ireland, which, if they had survived, would have placed Ireland in a very different position to-day. During the time of the Williamite Parliament—

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is a long way from the Amendment, which deals with the fall in the value of agricultural produce and the remedies proposed.

Mr. FARRELL said he thought it would be generally admitted that prices had been going down since 1879. While 481,185 quarters of wheat were produced in Ireland during the year 1876, the amount produced in 1895 was only 141,543 quarters. Of oats about a million quarters less were grown in Ireland in 1895 than in 1876. Barley, as every hon. Member knew, was a glut in the market, yet in 1876 1,109,000 quarters were produced against 827,000 quarters in 1895, or a falling off of one-third. Yet barley at any price was an unsaleable product in the Dublin and other markets. As to the area of cultivation, whilst in 1891, a by-no-means prosperous year, there were 701,000 acres under cultivation, in 1896 there were 670,000, a decline of more than 30,000. It was almost a proverb that the Irish pig was the Irish rent payer, but whereas pork was formerly from 35s. to 40s. per cwt., pork was now unsaleable at 26s. per cwt. He challenged the statement made on the authority of the Land Commission that it was 29s. 8d. It was not verified by actual facts, because, from his own knowledge of a number of places in Ireland, pigs had been a drug in the market at Irish fairs, and in many places had been unsaleable owing to the smallness of the demand for and the prices of them. It would be admitted both in England and Ireland that last year's season was a disastrous one. In Ireland large tracts of land were flooded. The potato crop, the staple crop of the country, was affected. It was an unfortunate characteristic of the potato that to keep up the produce it required to be constantly changed and renewed. In 1879 the Government introduced the "Champion" potato, but that had become so degenerated that it did not produce half as many as formerly, and another seed was now necessary. The Land Act of 1896 had failed to provide any effective remedy for the existing state of things, and nine-tenths of the Irish tenantry had been debarred from getting any relief from it. It was one of the most short-sighted acts of the present Government in their effort to settle this all-important Irish land question, to refuse the reasonable Amendment offered for the reduction of the statutory term from 15 years to 10 years. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Having regard to the decline of prices in England as well as in Ireland, and the loss of markets for Irish produce, it was very important that a speedy remedy should be provided for the hardship the Irish tenant had to endure of being compelled to pay a rent which the soil did not produce. That the rents were unjust was shown by the reductions the Sub-Commissioners were making—equal in amount, yet inadequate, as he maintained, to 30, 40, and

45 per cent. of the original rents fixed in 1881. Between 1881 and 1886 comparative prosperity supervened, and during those years the Land Commissioners raised the rents. It was monstrously unjust that in times like the present the tenants should be compelled to pay these rents when they were hardly in a position to do so. Reference had been made to town park holders in Ireland. Unfortunately he was a town park tenant. One case, which he could verify by actual personal knowledge, would convince the House of the injustice done in excluding, under one pretext or another, a class of tenants from the operation of Acts who undoubtedly deserved some sympathy. He knew a case in which the tenancy had existed directly for over sixty years. During that time the landlord had not laid out a farthing in improving the land. The original tenant commenced at a rent of £1 5s. In 1842 it was raised to £2 15s.; in 1856 it was raised to £3 5s.; in 1870 to £9, at which rent it had since remained, and at which it would remain as long as Parliament refused to recognise the entirely just and proper claim of the tenant for the value of improvements he and his forefathers had made on the land, but from which, under a caretaker's notice, he could be dismissed at any time. That such a tenant should be kept outside the operation of the Act of 1896 was monstrous and unjust. The question of improving the dwellings of labourers in Ireland struck at the root of a great social evil. Any Act of Parliament passed to improve the dwellings of the rural poor in Ireland would be a step not only in the interests of social order but in that of common humanity. He was well acquainted with Swinford, Achill, Belmullet, and other districts in Mayo, and nothing the hon. Member for Derby (Mr. Drage) said would convey an adequate notion of the misery endured by the unfortunate people who lived in those inhospitable regions. Only those who had been on the spot could really know the true state of things. During six months of every year the able-bodied men had to come over to England and Scotland on "contract work," sleeping out in sheds and barns to get together from £5 to £8, not for the sustenance of their wives and children, but to pay their landlords exorbitant rents for wild prairie land which they had brought from a state of absolute barrenness by their labour in manuring and sowing wheat, removing rocks and stones, and making land where practically no land previously existed. The hon. Member for Derby deserved the thanks of Nationalist Members for drawing attention to the horrible conditions under which these people lived. For his part he did not know that it would be in order if he were to suggest, in connection with this Debate, any of the remedies which he undoubtedly thought should be effected to improve the condition of the people in these districts. About eight or ten years ago Parliament passed an Act to open up the district by means of a railway. That undertaking did a great deal of good, but the line stopped short of Belmullet, an important town, and since then every effort to make the Government extend the railway had entirely failed. He had to say, as to the condition of the farmers at the present time, that he thought the statements made on that side of the House as to the rent being paid out of capital were entirely justified. He recognised that it was a hard thing to understand how a man could continue to pay rent out of capital and still go on working his farm. But if the accounts were balanced, he feared it would be found that a great many of the men who were supposed to be solvent tenants would be found to be deeply indebted indeed. If the shopkeepers in particular were to call in all their accounts and press for the full payment of the debts due to them, something like national bankruptcy must inevitably ensue. People in general had been living for a number of years from the credit advanced by the loan and local banks, and it was by this means alone that the tenant had been able to pay his rent during the last few years. He was sorry to learn from the Attorney General that the operations of the 47th Section of the Act of 1896 were so unsuccessful that in only eight cases out of 180 were consents obtained to settlements under that section. Such a state of facts, to his mind, showed a most unreasonable spirit on the part of the landlords concerned, who declined to avail themselves of an Act which undoubtedly could do much good, and which could not, by any possibility, do them any harm. It was, no doubt, purely voluntary, but he thought

if there had been some means of empowering the Commission, when they found unreasonable landlords to deal with them in a somewhat compulsory way, the Attorney General would not have had to give them such very unsatisfactory news as to the reinstatement of evicted tenants. He knew one case in the county Longford, in which the actual landlord was out of possession, and the Scottish Amicable Insurance Society were the mortgagees. The landlord was willing that a settlement should be made, but the Scottish Society stepped in and refused to allow this, with the result that the unfortunate tenant and his family were living in a most deplorable state. He was glad to be able to record his vote and give his strongest support to the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Mayo. He thought it would have been a lamentable thing, in view of all the facts, if they had allowed an occasion such as this to pass without expressing to the Government deep regret at their inability to deal with the matter of the settlement of the Irish Land Question, and he could only hope the effect of the most unsatisfactory reply of the Attorney General would be to consolidate and strengthen the determination of the tenant farmers of Ireland to press their views in a much more determined manner on the attention of Parliament.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) observed that after the answer given by the Government, it would probably be useless for him to appeal further to them to reconsider their position; yet the case that had been laid before the House ought, under ordinary circumstances, to move a person of a very hard heart to reconsider his position. The effect of legislation which was undertaken last year had unquestionably been endangered by the refusal of the Government to reconsider their determination not to shorten the judicial term. The case for shortening that term was so strong that it ought to have overcome the ordinary economic argument that might have been adduced against it. The necessity for shortening the legal term had been demonstrated by the fact that the proceedings of the Courts during the first four years of their existence had been denounced by the Judge of the Land Court himself. It was found, by the confession of Judge Bewley, that in regard to the present judicial rents fixed during the first four years after the setting up of the Land Courts, that the rents had been fixed on a wrong principle and on a false theory. It appeared that the Government had resolved not to move on this important question of shortening the terms of the judicial leases. One way by which the evil might be considerably lessened would be to adopt the proposition made by the hon. Member for North Louth—namely, that the Government should, in addition to the proposed legislation in the Queen's Speech, go further, and bring in an Agricultural Rates Bill for Ireland in the present Session, which would do for the Irish farmer that which was done last year for the English farmer, and reduce his rates by half, which had already been done in England. If the Government would consider that proposition, or adopt such portion of it as they might think fit, they would apply considerable alleviation to the present condition of the Irish tenant. There was one thing certain, and that was, that unless something was done to improve the condition of the tenants in Ireland the present state of peace and order was not likely to last long.

Mr. THOMAS LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought his hon. Friends had done well in emphasising the importance of the subject now under discussion and the unsatisfactory answer given by the Attorney General for Ireland. What was the whole essence of that answer? Hon. Members had stated that the agricultural depression and low prices made the payment of rent impossible. The Attorney General said that Ireland had not escaped any more than had England the effect of these low prices, and his point was, that the situation of Ireland was just the same as that of England. But the grievous thing to the Irish Members was, that while England, or, indeed, the whole of Great Britain, was in a state of the greatest prosperity, Ireland was on the verge of ruin. It was this bitter contrast that was rankling in the minds not only of the Nationalist Members from Ireland, but of those who had to struggle for a meagre existence there. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to quote prices in support of his extraordinary statement that the situation was the same, but they proved exactly the opposite of what he contended. Every price the right hon. Gentleman quoted about England was a rising price.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I did not quote any price about England.

MR. LOUGH said he heard the right hon. Gentleman quote English prices, and they were all rising prices, and all the Irish prices he quoted were falling prices. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned wheat. Was any wheat grown in Ireland? Wheat had saved the English farmer this year, but he was astonished that the right hon. Gentleman should suggest that it could possibly do any good to the Irish farmer. The right hon. Gentleman also mentioned hay. There had been a small rise in hay, but it had been no good to the Irish farmer because he had not the means of getting the hay to the market profitably. Then the right hon. Gentleman mentioned articles that had fallen. He referred to butter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The hon. Member mistakes me. I said that butter was one of the articles that had risen.

MR. LOUGH apologised to the right hon. Gentleman. That was so, but the rise, two and a half per cent., was very small, and was no use to Ireland, for the reason that Irish butter had ceased to command a high price in the English market. The right hon. Gentleman would admit there had been a great fall in the price of store cattle, and nothing contributed more to the profits of English farmers than the low price of store cattle. So that that which ruined Ireland made England rich. That point touched the very centre of the mistake the Government were making. It was not only with regard to this year, but with regard to the past 50 years that the people of Ireland felt that while circumstances were such as to bring them lower and lower every year, the people in Great Britain were flourishing more and more every day. Every statement of the hon. Member for Derby was grounded on fact. The hon. Member pointed attention to the fact that there were districts in Ireland not scheduled as congested districts, where the people were poorer than in the so-called congested districts. There was a population of 2,000,000 nearly all along the West Coast with barely the means of subsistence, and shamefully housed. Not one of the statements of the hon. Member for Derby had been controverted. This had been a valuable Debate, for it was laying the foundation of a question of which the Government would hear much. The defence of the Government was going to be that the condition of things in Ireland was the same as in England. They had had the beginning of the defence that night, and the friends of Ireland were trying to lay the foundation of their case, which was that Ireland was discriminated against, that Ireland was ruined, while Great Britain was prospering beyond all nations of the world. He thought the Queen's Speech was about the worst Speech ever given to the House. It commenced with massacres and went into war, rebellion, and famine. It left out the clause about economy. It threatened new taxes for military purposes, and finally, its promises of legislation were of the thinnest, vaguest, and most unsatisfactory kind. No part of the Speech was so unsatisfactory as that which dealt with Ireland, and he thought the hon. Member for East Mayo extremely wise to bring forward this broad resolution. A year ago he stated to the House that 1895 had been a most disastrous year for Ireland, but he was not able to prove it, because no facts with regard to that year had been presented. That was a difficulty hon. Members always laboured under with regard to Ireland. They never got the facts until they were too late to be of use. Since Parliament separated they had got some facts about 1895, and they absolutely justified his statement. In December they had an account of the local taxation.

*MR. SPEAKER: The question of Irish taxation does not arise in the Amendment. It has been reserved for discussion on another day.

MR. LOUGH said he had no intention of going into it. He only suggested that the burden of taxation pressed too heavily on their poor people. They were at the beginning of another Session, and Irishmen were met with the same indifference on the part of the Government. They did not know what Ireland had suffered in 1896. The returns would not be laid for another year. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House said the other day, with the greatest *naïveté*, with regard to the taxation question, "How is it that it has not been mentioned for 70 years?"

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is really still discussing that question.

MR. LOUGH said he did not mean to

go into it at any length. He was only going to point out that the right hon. Gentleman did not know the facts. Practically the whole of last Session they were discussing the difficulties of the British farmer and landowner, and great relief was given to them in local taxation. What was done for the Irish farmer? Absolutely nothing. The whole case was left over. He was aware that £180,000 was set aside, but where was it now? No proposal had been made with regard to the money. The relief given to the British farmer in 1896 was rankling in the minds of everybody in Ireland. Allusion had been made to the disastrous harvest. In Great Britain the weather on the whole was favourable for the harvest. ["No, no!"] At any rate it was in many places. In Ireland the harvest was practically washed away, and that made it much harder to bear the burden of rent and taxation, which was just as heavy as it ever was. Perhaps the most prosperous parts of Ireland were those in which the wide grazing districts were situated, and yet he was informed that even those districts had suffered great distress last year. The farmers in those districts had been forced to sell their cattle after they had been upon their land for some five or six months at the same price that they had paid for them, and thereby they had sustained a very heavy loss. Great distress had fallen upon the south and middle of Ireland also in consequence of the fall in the price of barley. In a most interesting article that had appeared in *The Times* a sort time ago, summarising the progress of the year in Ireland, it was shown that during the last six months there had been a great decrease in the revenues of the railways in that country. That was a striking proof of the state of agriculture in that country, because the receipts of the Irish railways were chiefly derived from the carriage of agricultural produce. He thought that the control of remote branches of Irish railways should be taken over by the Irish Local Government Board. Another proof of the distressed condition of the country was to be found in the large increase of its pauperism, and he was satisfied that in many districts in Ireland the population were on the verge of famine. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had said that the pauperism of the country would be relieved under the Poor Law, but it would be most unfortunate if the people of Ireland were taught to rely upon Poor Law relief. The serious feature of the situation was that the misery suffered by the Irish people was contrasted with the great progress and comfort that prevailed in Great Britain. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the Report of the Recess Committee, but that Report deprived the Government of their last protection. The defence of the Government had been that, seeing that Ireland was an agricultural country, she must of necessity experience her share of the distress which had fallen upon agricultural countries generally. But the Report of the Recess Committee showed that in agricultural countries such as Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the population had doubled within the present century, and that was a proof under a proper system and Government, agricultural countries might become prosperous. He should like to draw a distinction between the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Mayo and the speech by which he supported it, which went far beyond the terms of the Amendment itself. He did not agree with the opinion of the hon. Member that no good had resulted from the Act of last year. He was as anxious as the hon. Member himself was to see something done for the benefit of Ireland, and he had no desire to make light of anything that the Government had done in that direction. This matter ought not to be regarded from a party point of view in Ireland. The Irish landlord had his grievances as well as the Irish tenants. The true interest of the Irish people, whether landlords or tenants, was to band themselves together in order to secure harmony of feeling among all classes, and to obtain a better Government than that which now occupied the Front Bench opposite. As far as he understood the policy of the Government, it was to set the classes of Ireland against one another, and having accomplished that object to ruin them all with perfect impartiality. He knew a good deal about Ireland, because he had seen much of what was going on there during his recent visit to that country. When he was in the north of Ireland he had attended a little cattle show there and had seen the Orange band and the Nationalist band arrive, not to lead rival factions against each other, but to give as much music and success to the occasion as they could. It seemed to him that in all parts of Ireland at the present moment there was a disposition on the part of the people to draw together and to relieve themselves of the great difficulties under which they were all placed by the legislation of that House. He hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo would forgive him for saying that the true interest of every Nationalist was to seek the harmonious and common action of all the people of Ireland against their enemies, the Government which sat on the opposite benches. As far as he could judge, the Irish Members had commenced the Session pretty well, but he did not sympathise with certain threats as to what would occur in Ireland if that House did not follow a particular course. If he might apply a scriptural comparison, he would say that it seemed to him that the Government were like the unjust judge, who feared not God and regarded not man in connection with Ireland. He would compare the Irish party to the widow who came to the judge crying that she should be avenged of her adversary, and who troubled him because her prayer was not granted.

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down might be an excellent judge of what the policy of the Government ought to be, and he also might be an admirable judge of widows, but he certainly was not an authority that the Irish Party could recognise as one from whom they were going to take their policy. Hon. Members on the Government Benches had complained of this discussion being raised, but surely the justification was to be found in the Queen's Speech itself. It was there stated that the agricultural interests of Ireland were of paramount importance. If that was the opinion of the Government, how could they object to any part of the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Mayo? What did they learn from the First Lord of the Treasury when the hon. Member for East Mayo, speaking last night, made a slip in saying there were no Nationalists on the Congested Districts Board? He heard a plurality of plurals from the First Lord, and he rose from his seat in the firm conviction that every member of the Congested Districts Board was a Nationalist. But he found there were two Nationalists on that Board, and he supposed that was so only for appearance sake. Everything in Ireland was done for appearance sake. The policy of the Government was all for appearance sake; it was like the policy of the man who went out to dinner in a sedan chair with the bottom out, and who said if it was not for appearance sake he would as soon have walked. He denied that Ireland was prosperous. Why was she not prosperous? Because she was an agricultural country. England had a teeming population, and she had to feed it. What did she do? She ruined the small agricultural country by allowing every country in the world to compete with her in her produce. England said to Ireland, "Yes, I will tax you in more ways than one; I will make you sell your produce at famine prices in order that I can feed my population." Irishmen were asked why they did not hold out the hand of friendship. They did not do so because of the gibes and sneers and laughter they heard when they brought up the ills and griefs of their country. They came to Parliament Session after Session with the old, old story, and what did they get? Hon. Members said they had heard the story often, and did not believe it. Why was Ireland not treated as England and Scotland were treated? Why did not Irish agriculture receive the relief which was given to agriculture in the two other countries last year? If it did, it would receive £900,000 instead of £180,000. He trusted the Government would not look upon this Motion as one which was made factionally, but as one which had been wrung from the hon. Member for East Mayo by the contemplation of the troubles and sorrows and distresses of the most worthy and industrious people whom he and his colleagues were sent to Parliament to represent.

MR. WILLIAM O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara) said that the Irish Members and their constituents felt greatly indebted to the hon. Member for Islington for the great interest he had taken in the cause of Ireland. Personally, he offered the hon. Gentleman his thanks for the speech he had made, just as he offered his thanks to the hon. Member for Derby for the interest he had taken in the Irish cause. At present, upon the financial relations between the two countries Nationalists and Unionists were making common cause, and it was the hope of every man sitting around him that once the Land Question was settled they would find landlords and tenants, Nationalists and Unionists, working in harmony for the common good of the country. Irish Members were twitted with indulging too much in sentiment, but surely upon the present occasion they had adduced facts and figures sufficient to convince the Government? He trusted that even now, the eleventh hour, they would do justice to his unfortunate country. He happened to represent one of the poorest parts of Ireland—a congested district in the West of Galway, and he feared the Board of Agriculture promised to Ireland in the Queen's Speech would afford very little material aid to his poor constituents, whose poverty was mainly due to the exorbitant rents exacted from them, regardless of the miserable land on which they sought to maintain an existence. Moreover, they had been handicapped by being deprived of every means of encouraging their own native industries. It was obvious that any country where the population was decreasing, and the ability to pay taxes diminishing, was in a bad condition. A few figures would prove this in regard to the county of Galway. From 1851 to 1895 no fewer than 133,126 persons had emigrated. In 1841 the population was 414,810; in 1891 it had fallen to 214,712, a decrease of 60 per cent., and those figures would apply pretty generally with the rest of Ireland. In 1841 there were 75,982 houses in Galway; in 1891 only 41,385. It was impossible for any hon. Member who was not personally acquainted with this part of Ireland to realise the poverty, distress, and misery that existed there, especially on the coast line, and he would earnestly appeal to the Government, and to the Chief Secretary especially, to see what they could do to relieve the suffering of these poor people and to do whatever they did in the matter in a prompt, thorough, and effective manner. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. DAVID SHEEHY (Galway, S.) said that it had ever been a serious error on the part of English Ministers to minimise the troubles and difficulties of Ireland, and he was very sorry that the hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland had to a large extent fallen into the same mistake in his speech that night. The reason of this was that Ministers had the fatal tendency to rely so much and so thoroughly on the reports of their subordinates—on the comparatively roseate reports sent to them by their inspectors in Ireland. But to whom did those inspectors go—to what class of men did they go to make inquiries? Why, invariably to the wrong class of men to obtain full and accurate information as to the real facts. ["Hear, hear!"] They never happened to make their inquiries of those who, in the nature of things, were the best able to state the actual condition of things, and to state them fully and fairly. He had found in his own experience, and it was the case generally, that the inspector generally went to the landlord or local magnate for his information, and as it was to the direct interest of the landlord to keep down the rates, which fell heavily upon him, he put the best face on things that he could. The inspector only echoed in his report what was told him by the landlord, and consequently the Government rarely got a real knowledge of the actual state of things in Ireland, and of the deplorable condition of the people in the poorer districts of the country. This method of offering to meet distress in many districts by the ordinary administration of the law was like offering to feed a dog on its own tail. The Government were asked to come to the relief of distress in the congested districts, where poverty was extreme at the present moment, where the actual food supply was already consumed, and where the outlook for the people in many districts was absolute famine. They were told they must be satisfied because inspectors had been sent down to make careful inquiries. Would these inspectors go to those who could give them accurate information, to the parish Priest, and to those who were intimately acquainted with the wants and the needs of the people, or would they be left a free hand and go only to the local district inspector, the local agent or the local magnate? They would watch and wait to see whether the refusal to do nothing for Ireland but what was foreshadowed in the Queen's Speech; and if, notwithstanding the pressure that would be put upon them, the Government continued to turn a deaf, dull, unsympathetic ear to all their claims and demands, no matter what their justice and pressing necessity, then the Government would not have so easy an existence as they had mapped out for themselves. The cries of the people of Ireland had almost reached the limits of endurance and forbearance, and the Government were acting injudiciously and unwisely in putting the screw and the pressure of necessity so severely on the Irish people as to compel them in their own interest and for their own safety to take another and more violent course. He warned the Government that if this extreme and arrogant attitude of refusal were maintained they would certainly have to meet an outburst of public feeling in Ireland for which they and they alone would be responsible. Knowing the people as he did, he said they would not remain restrained much longer, unless another course were adpoted. The Land Act of last year had not brought the people any permanent or immediate relief, and immediate relief was urgently required. They demanded from the Government—and if the Government were wise they would grant them immediate relief in these respects—a short Act shortening the judicial term, the renewal of the Act of 1887, a brief Arrears Act, and an Act reducing automatically the judicial rents of Ireland. These things were necessary, for the farmers of Ireland could not continue in their present condition. He pressed again upon the Government the necessity of their coming to some solution of the claims of Ireland at the present time. He did not suppose that anything would come out of this Amendment directly, but he hoped the question would be raised again and again until the Government conceded some of their legitimate demands.

Dr. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.) was surprised to hear the Attorney General for Ireland say that the existing Poor Law was sufficient to meet the distress, and that the distress was not more than normal in some of the districts. He would give figures to show that in Achill Island, and the Westport Union there was more than normal distress. On the 17th of January a deputation waited upon the Westport Guardians, who, as a result of the representations made to them, gave £9 2s. 6d. of out-door relief, which amounted to £500 a year, whereas they only made an estimate of £100 or £200. The value of crops in Ireland had fallen from £58,000,000 in 1851 to £34,000,000 in 1889. The value of stock had in the same period increased from £39,000,000 to £54,000,000. Local taxation had increased from £2,000,000 to £3,000,000. Population had decreased from 8,000,000 in 1841 to 5,129,000 in 1881, and in 1891 it was 4,681,000. It might be said that with the decrease of population life was made worth living to those who remained. But to establish that proposition there should be a decrease in the Poor Rate, whereas there had been an enormous increase from £959,736 in 1873 to £1,397,032 in 1893. It was scarcely necessary to go into the statistics of emigration, but in the 30 years between 1831 and 1861, out of a total of 4,645,247 emigrants who left these islands, Ireland supplied 3,097,465. From 1st May, 1851, to January, 1896, the total emigration from Ireland was 3,651,425, or about 70 per cent. of a population of 5,500,000. Of the total number of emigrants, about 85 per cent. were between the ages of 10 and 45, so that it would appear that the young and able-bodied left Ireland and the old remained at home to die. Two remedies had been suggested for the disastrous condition of Irish agriculture, and one of these was the establishment of an Agricultural Board, the addition of one more to the number of Boards with which Ireland was saddled at a cost of nearly £27,000. And, again, instead of light railways in the West of Ireland, there were rumours in the air that the Chief Secretary intended to run a lug-boat from Achill Sound to Belmullet, and this, it was suggested, would bring peace and happiness to Achill people, who endeavoured to get a living out of holdings of a quarter of an acre. He recommended the right hon. Gentleman to give up these ideas. A useful Board existed in Ireland, the Congested Districts Board, which would be swept away by the new Board. But the Congested Districts Board had been doing excellent work for years past, and he suggested that they should continue their work and be invested with compulsory powers for the purchase of land upon fair arbitration terms. Let the Congested Districts Board divide such land into reasonable-sized holdings at Achill and elsewhere, and in this way there would be more effect than any number of lug-boats between Achill and Belmullet.

Question put, "That those words be there added."

The House divided :—Ayes, 125; Noes, 189.—(Division List—No. 3—Appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, W.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carew, James Laurence
Causton, Richard Knight
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Collery, Bernard
Commins, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Engledow, Charles John
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William (Dublin)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gibney, James
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrington, Timothy
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth.)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, William
M'Cartan, Michael
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Donnell, Dr. M. A. (Queen's C.)
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
Maden, John Henry
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Murnaghan, George
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehy, David
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Tuite, James
Tully, Jasper
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsf'ld
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir Thomas Esmonde and Dr. Tanner.

NOES.

Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bethell, Commander
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Davies, Horatio D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, G. C. Adolphus
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans.)

Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kemp, George
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'ns'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesh'm)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
M'Iver, Sir Lewis
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W.F.
Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robert Jasper
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stone, Sir John Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell (Bir.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh, N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

CATHOLICS OF IRELAND (UNIVERSITY EDUCATION).

MR. CHARLES ENGLEDOW (Kildare, N.) moved at the end of the Question, to add the words—

> "And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the Catholics of Ireland have suffered under an intolerable grievance in respect of University Education; that the existence of this grievance has been recognised by successive Governments; and that it is the duty of the Government immediately to propose legislation with a view to placing Irish Catholics on a footing of equality with their fellow countrymen in all matters concerned with University Education.

He said that it was with grave regret and deep disappointment that he had read the Speech from the Throne, and found in it no mention of any intention on the part of the Government to take some steps to remedy the injustice which the Irish Roman Catholics had, and were suffering, in the matter of University Education. So long as that injustice remained, was it to be expected that the Roman Catholic population of Ireland could be content to tolerate a grievance so serious against their spiritual, as well as material, interests? He thought he might take it for granted that all, at any rate a very large majority, of those who understood the University system of Ireland would agree with him that a serious grievance did exist. And by no one had this grievance been more clearly shown, nor the intellectual and material disadvantages resulting from the present condition of things been more clearly laid down, than by the First Lord of the Treasury. He did not suppose it was generally known in this country that large numbers of Irishmen were at present precluded from the enjoyment of university education, honours, and emoluments on account of their conscientious religious opinions. What did they claim? Nothing more than that some arrangement should be come to so as to put the Roman Catholics on a footing of equality with their fellow-countrymen. He hoped that the House would not consider that an unreasonable request, and that the present system, which was distinctly disadvantageous to those who hold these conscientious objections, would be amended, and these disadvantages removed, so that all Irishmen, no matter what their creed might be, would stand on a footing of equality with the rest of their fellow-countrymen—so far, at any rate, as university education, honours, and emoluments were concerned. They had for many years been claiming justice on the point, but, alas! nothing had been done by the responsible Ministers of the Crown. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, as far back as July 1885, speaking as one of Her Majesty's Ministers in this House, stated—

> "If it be our lot to be in authority next year, I hope that we shall be able to advance some proposal which will be a satisfactory settlement of this most important question."

But not one single step had been taken to settle this most important question. The Leader of the House, in the year 1889, when questioned on the subject whether his attention had been drawn to certain resolutions passed by the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland, said—

> "The resolutions deal with many questions, and over the whole field of education in Ireland. Without giving specific answers to the various points alluded to in them, I may say that some of them, notably higher education, have long been under the consideration of the Government, and in respect to them we hope to be able to make proposals to the House."

And again, the right hon. Gentleman, in his speech on the Appropriation Bill, was still more explicit in recognising our grievances—

> "I repeat in the House what I have said outside the House, that in my opinion something ought to be done to give higher University education to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. . . .
>
> "The experiment of undenominational higher education has now been tried sufficiently long to make it, I am afraid, perfectly clear that nothing Parliament has hitherto done to promote that object will really meet the wants and wishes of the Roman Catholic population of that country.
>
> "This being so, we have no alternative but to try and devise some scheme by which the wants of the Catholic population shall be met."

He trusted, therefore, he might appeal with confidence to the right hon. Gentleman that he would devise a scheme to remedy a state of things in Ireland which he had himself described as "not creditable," and such as he cannot look upon with equanimity. He thought he wa right when he said that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that he ha been compelled to pass over Roman Catholics in Ireland when making appointments to which he would hav wished to have appointed a Roman Catholic, owing to their want of university education.

> "Most of the endeavours to solve the question had, he was afraid, been failures, whic had brought more or less discredit on thos who had attempted its solution. He did no know, if he was to try and solve it, that h should be more fortunate than those who ha preceded him. He was not in a position t pledge the Government in this matter; but h repeated that, so far as he was personally concerned, he should be glad to try and make solution of the problem, and it would be great pride to him, if, before he ceased to hol the office he now held, he could feel that eve some step had been taken towards the solutio of a problem which he was certain was intimately bound up with the future prosperity Ireland."

No doubt they had two Universities i Ireland—Trinity College, Dublin, an Queen's College, Belfast. But they coul not claim that the work done by th other Queen's Colleges was worthy much consideration. The Roman Catholic Colleges had been very successful i certain classes of examinations, but th conditions under which they existe limited their labours to a very smal field. In the Universities of Dublin Trinity College, and Queen's College Belfast, there were, he thought, som 1,500 or 1,600 students, and out of tha number there were only about 50 or 6 Roman Catholics. In such a state o affairs was it to be wondered at tha Roman Catholics with a University education were not numerous? He though he might safely say that those who ha the welfare of Ireland at heart must hav it brought home to them, in the stronges manner, the almost impossibility of raising a nation to that standard and ton they all desired, when three-fourths o its inhabitants were debarred from th direct or indirect advantages of the ful training of those intellectual abilitie which, he thought, would be acknowledged by all are possessed in no smal degree by Irishmen. During this yea some 8,000 students had presented themselves for the Intermediate Examination and by far the largest proportion of tha number were Roman Catholics. Th House must not take him as suggestin hat all of that large number would take advantage of University education; but he thought they had a right to expect that a large proportion would, and that number would increase from year to year; and also that a university education was the natural completion of such studies. It has been said by Archbishop Walsh—and there was no greater authority in Ireland on educational matters—

> "That national education was the foundation, intermediate education was the walls, and university education the roof of the structure upon which the hopes, the ambitions, and prosperity of a nation must exist."

He asked why, in all honesty and fair play, why that structure should be complete with regard to the minority, and that important structure should be roofless in the case of the majority. It must be plain to all that it was impossible for Irishmen to participate in a system of university education which, in the words of the Leader of the House, was—"if not by its constitution, at all events by its construction, a Protestant institution." The whole current of thoughts and training in that institution were antagonistic to the current of thoughts and training of a very large majority of the Irish people, and also in antagonism with their undoubted conscientious principles. Had not the majority of Irishmen a right—an undoubted right—to claim that boon—the greatest of all boons—the right of university education? He could not believe that a great and rich nation like England, whose boast was that she gives equal treatment to all, would refuse that fair treatment they have a right to demand and receive. He did not desire to occupy time by reading xtracts from speeches, but he hoped that he House would bear with him when he ead to them a short extract from an rticle written by the Under Secretary o the Local Government Board, in the *Fortnightly Review*, in February 1892—

> "So far as university education is conerned, the Catholic grievance is *too plain to e ignored*. So long as the atmosphere is hat it is in the University of Dublin and in rinity College—*i.e.*, so long as there is a rotestant chapel and service, a Protestant ivinity school, and a teaching staff almost ntirely Protestant, it is impossible to say that atholics ought to be content.
>
> "Nor can it be fairly urged that the Royal niversity—a mere examining board—adeuately supplies the place of a teaching niversity.
>
> "I say the grievance here is undoubted. It ought to be dealt with in a liberal and fair spirit. On this branch of the question I go quite as far as Mr. Balfour went in his speech (in 1889)."

It was now a quarter of a century since this question was made a Cabinet question, but, alas! not a single step had been taken to improve or amend the conditions of affairs complained of during all those years. And he could hardly imagine that a demand so in harmony with the opinions expressed by so many Members of the Government could be or would be refused or postponed. Let it not be said that Ireland could not get either justice or fair play from the English Government without agitation—and serious agitation; but he would ask the House to meet this serious question in that just and generous spirit which it deserved. He again appealed to the Leader of the House, in the hope that he would not allow another Session of Parliament to pass without coming to a definite conclusion on the subject.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.), in seconding the Amendment, said Irishmen had had plenty of sympathetic declarations from British Statesmen on both sides that Ireland was entitled to a Catholic University, but to-day they were no nearer the point than they were a quarter of a century ago when these declarations were first made. Four-fifths of the population in Ireland were Catholics, and they were absolutely deprived of the unique advantages which a University education gave. He regretted that Mr. Sexton, who had brought this question into prominence, was no longer in the House. It was due entirely to his insistence that the First Lord of the Treasury made the memorable speech on this subject at Partick in 1889. In the four endowed colleges in Ireland—Trinity College and the three Queen's Colleges—there were only 250 Catholic students. The reason was simply that the system of University education which it was attempted to force on the people was contrary to their religious ideas and convictions, and that they believed it to be intrinsically bad in faith and morals. He knew of no other country where a sacrifice so keenly felt would be so unhesitatingly made for the sake of conscience. The principle of Catholic University education had been admitted by the leaders of the Irish Parliament, and, therefore, if the Act of Union had not been passed, the question would long ago have been settled. Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, had stated that the Catholic demand was for equality of endowments and status. The Irish Catholic Bishops, assembled in conference in October last, had made a strong declaration on this subject, which showed the intensity of their feeling. They stated that by no one had the admitted grievance of the Irish Catholics in the matter of University education, and the intellectual and material impoverishment resulting therefrom been put with greater force than by the First Lord of the Treasury in his remarkable speech at Partick. He now came to a declaration of the Irish Catholic Bishops, which, if it had been uttered by a Nationalist Member on a public platform, would be described as an appeal to the passions. The prelates supported what had been said again and again by Irish Members in the House, that nothing was done for Ireland by Parliament unless the claim for justice was emphasised by violence. Again and again had the Irish Members urged upon Government after Government what they thought ought to be done for their country, but almost every Government turned a deaf ear to them unless they were terrorised to do justice to Ireland.

> "Violence and excess obtain a ready recognition and lead to the redress of grievances,"

said the Bishops.

> "The constitutionally expressed desires of the Irish people through Parliamentary elections, and the action of their Members of Parliament, count unfortunately for little."

The prelates then went on to say that for 40 years they had been agitating this grievance of university education; and that at any time during all those years the overwhelming majority of their countrymen were in favour of their claim; and they pointed out, in conclusion, that this prolonged neglect to settle the question was a powerful argument in favour of Home Rule. The Chief Secretary had said that he intended to kill Home Rule by kindness. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman that Home Rule would not be killed by soft words. Kindness would, of course, be appreciated; but after all the kindness of the Government Irish people would be the better Home Rulers still. He had extracted from "Hansard" no fewer tha 12 declarations made by responsibl Statesmen during the last 25 years i favour of the creation of an Irish Catholic University. The first was Lord Mayo who was Chief Secretary for Ireland i 1867. Then came Sir Stafford Northcote, who was Leader of the House i 1875. Earlier than that, in 1873, un versity education in Ireland occupied large portion of the time of the Whi Government, which, unfortunately, co lapsed. In 1885 the present Chancello of the Exchequer, who occupied that yea the same office in a Conservative Government, declared that the question of Iris University Education would have th most serious attention. It had been considered for 11 years without any effect Four years later, in 1895, the First Lord of the Treasury—then Chief Secretar for Ireland—made a most friendly declaration. In reply to a question pu to him as to whether he considered th resolutions of the Catholic Bishops o Ireland in regard to education, the righ hon. Gentleman said that some of th questions dealt with by the prelates—notably higher education—had long bee under the consideration of the Government, and in respect to them the hoped to make proposals to th House. Eight years had passed sinc then, and still there were no proposals This was a subject on which there wa no distinction of creed or party. Th inaugural address of the Philosophi Society was upon this subject, and tw distinguished Irish scholars—Lord Justic Fitzgibbon, who was an eminen authority, and who would not speak o any subject which savoured of politics and Judge Webb, who had been a fello of Trinity College, and was a very prominent politician on the Tory side—expressed themselves in favour of Catholi Universities chartered and endowed. A very distinguished member of the governing body of the University had said t him recently that all Members would sign in favour of such a proposal. O course no series of quotations would b complete without one from the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The hon. Membe had said that amongst the first thing the Government would have to conside would be the question of Catholic University Education in Ireland, and he said it was sure to come because the Firs Lord had promised it years ago. Ther

Mr. Swift MacNeill.

the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had said that the Government would have to deal with Catholic Education. How could the right hon. Gentleman opposite separate private from public matters? No one had a greater admiration for the right hon. Gentleman than he, but it would certainly militate very much against the high esteem in which he was held if he went back upon these declarations. It was a grievous injustice. He must refer to what the right hon. Gentleman had said himself. He was not going to "Hansardise" him, but to *Times* him. [*Laughter.*] As to dealing with University Education in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman said he was not the only offender. He had done as others had done before him, and he mentioned the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Mayo, Sir S. Northcote, and Mr. Gladstone. Then he came to his *apologia*, and said sectarian education in Ireland could not be escaped. Then the right hon. Gentleman spoke in a tone of great propriety about the religious system in Ireland, even in the so-called undenominational colleges. The Catholic students in the College had, it was true, religious instruction from their own teachers, and could attend Mass and the other ordinances of the Catholic faith at their own churches. Yet this system was called undenominational. The right hon. Gentleman wished the Irish people to be educated as they themselves desired, and said that to substitute an undenominational system for a denominational system had utterly failed, and whatever our own thoughts and feelings were as to the merits of the two systems we were bound to accept the overwhelming mass of opinion in Ireland. Then he spoke of Queen's College, Belfast, a most successful institution, and said that only eleven of the students were Catholics, and mentioned an interesting fact that when the Presidentship fell vacant he recommended the appointment of a Presbyterian Minister. Then he said, "Look at your denominational education." In 1881, when the Provostship of Trinity College, Dublin, fell vacant, as far as merit was concerned, Dr. Ingram should have been appointed, who was undoubtedly the favourite, but Dr. Jellett was chosen. The only bar to Dr. Ingram's appointment was that he was not a cleric of Trinity College. The College was an Anglican institution—he liked it all the more for it—and the intensity of the religious character of this "undenominational" institution was shown by the fact that since the disestablishment of the Irish Church nearly all the most distinguished men of the College had been in orders. In the same speech from which he had quoted the right hon. Gentleman said that University education was a gift. He objected to that phrase, and it was probably the only phrase in the whole of the speech to which he had any objection. The Irish people did not want a gift. They wanted their money. Restitution was no gift; even a philosopher could understand that. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman ought to be widely circulated, so that everyone who wished to understand the question could see what the denial of University education meant to the Catholics. The right hon. Gentleman wound up his speech with a very beautiful peroration, but the next morning there was a furious article in *The Times*, telling him amongst other things that the subject had passed for a time out of the sphere of practical politics. No wonder that John Bright, before his perversion, called *The Times* "the devil's agent upon earth." He asked the right hon. Gentleman, did he now, as Leader of the House, and as First Lord of the Treasury, stand to his guns and declare that the sentiments he held in 1889 were those he had to-day? If so, and if he did not make this question an imperative matter of policy upon which he would stand or fall, it was useless to have such an opinion upon such matters. The right hon. Gentleman was with him on this question, and why did he not make his friends be with him, or infuse earnestness into the question? He said that Ireland demanded compensation in this matter for the wrongs of the past. This denial to the Catholics of University education was simply a relict of the penal laws. They could not, of course, remedy the deeds of the past, but they could make some atonement by acting justly, kindly and generously with the people of the present day. The conduct of the English Government with reference to Irish Catholic education was almost as base as the destruction of Irish industries one after another in the 18th century—almost as base in its way as the deliberate promotion in Ireland of infectious diseases in order to destroy the nation.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said he desired to take the earliest opportunity possible to protest against the step which was advocated in the Amendment before the House. He implored the First Lord of the Treasury to consider carefully the effect of such a Resolution as this on the Party of which he was an ornament and on the country. He was in that House in 1873, when Mr. Gladstone, the most powerful Minister the country had seen, brought forward the subject of University education in Ireland, and he remembered—and he was glad to remember—that he had a considerable share in bringing about the defeat of the right hon. Gentleman's measure on that occasion, which, after he had tried to conciliate the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, failed utterly in that object, and brought about the downfall of the Government. When he had the honour to be a student at Trinity College, he had as fellow-students two grandsons of Daniel O'Connell, and they never complained that the University of Dublin interfered with their religious sentiments. It was well known in the country that all the emoluments of the University, from the highest to the lowest, were open to Roman Catholics, and that there was no attempt ever made to interfere with the religious sentiments of any student who entered that University. He would ask Her Majesty's Government to pause before they gave their sanction to a policy which would probably disintegrate their Party. That Party felt strongly on the Protestant question. He denied that there was an intolerable grievance such as that spoken of that night, or that the great bulk of the Catholic population of Ireland was a population which was likely to take advantage of a Roman Catholic University. It was with great pain that he rose upon that occasion, but he thought that the character of the country as a Protestant nation was at stake. He fully concurred in the opinion that had been expressed in that House by Mr. Disraeli, that the people of Great Britain were a Protestant people, and objected to any endowment of Roman Catholic establishments by the State. He implored the Government not to be led away by the hope of conciliating the Irish Party into making any proposal for the State endowment of a Roman Catholic university.

Mr. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) moved the Adjournment of the Debate.

Motion agreed to;

Debate was adjourned till to-morrow.

THE LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight), moved for leave to introduce a Bill to Amend the Law of Evidence in Criminal cases.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that he very sincerely regretted that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General should have seen fit to move for leave to bring in this Bill at that hour of the night. Such a Measure should not be brought in unless there was time to discuss it, and in his view, looking at the programme of the Government as indicated by the Queen's Speech, there would be no time to discuss such a Measure during the present Session. On every previous occasion this Measure had been introduced in that House of civil and religious liberty the House of Lords, and why had it not been introduced there upon the present occasion? He himself had always opposed this Measure; why did not the Government take their Bills in the order in which they were referred to in the Queen's Speech, according to which this Measure was only the 19th in importance? The five minutes that remained before midnight had arrived might have been devoted to some more important subject. Why had not the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies proceeded with his Motion for the appointment of the South African Committee? He had come down to that House with the expectation that the right hon. Gentleman would have proposed the appointing of an additional Irish Member upon that Committee. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had asked for leave to introduce this Measure without saying a single word as to its principles and objects.

The hon. and learned Gentleman was speaking at 12 o'clock, when the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

Adjourned at One minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 22nd January 1897.

LORD PENRHYN'S QUARRIES (CORRESPONDENCE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th January: *Sir George Osborne Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY WORKS [MONEY].

Committee to consider of making provision for the execution of Military Works and for other Military purposes, and of authorising the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—*(Mr. Brodrick.)*

QUESTIONS.

LOAN FUND ACTS (IRELAND).

MR. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the decision of the County Court Judge for Donegal in the case of Doherty *v.* Travers, given at Donegal on the 9th instant; and whether he is in a position to say when the Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into and report upon the administration of the Loan Fund Acts in Ireland will be presented?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): As I stated yesterday, attention has been drawn to the observations of the learned Judge in the case mentioned. The Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the administration of the Loan Funds is now under the consideration of the Loan Fund Board, who are in consultation with their legal advisers on the subject, and until the Government have received the further suggestions of the Board I do not think the Report can properly be laid on the Table of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Bill dealing with the interest and repayment of local loans, promised last Session, will be introduced?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I made no promise last Session to introduce a Bill dealing with the interest and repayment of local loans. I promised to consider the matter, and said that I hoped to be able to introduce a Bill. I have a scheme before me, but am not in a position at present to make any more definite statement on the subject.

ASKEATON AND KILMALLOCK ABBEYS.

MR. F. A. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will direct that further early proceedings be taken by the Irish Board of Works to complete the vesting order and remove certain legal difficulties regarding Askeaton Abbey, in the county of Limerick, so that the Abbey may be restored under the Ancient Monuments Protection Acts (Ireland); and, to ask a similar question regarding Kilmallock Abbey, in the county of Limerick?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): These structures are vested in the Board of Works—the Askeaton Abbey by Order of July 1896, and Kilmallock Abbey by Order of December 1892. The necessary works of preservation have been carried out at Askeaton. Certain works are required at Kilmallock Abbey, but difficulties have arisen as to the means of access to the ruin. It is hoped that these difficulties will be disposed of at an early date, after which the work will be undertaken without unnecessary delay.

ELECTRIC METERS.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade have approved any meter for the electric light; whether it is necessary that such meters should be submitted periodically to any local authority for testing purposes; and, what is the margin of error which the Board of Trade will allow in such meter?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): The Board of Trade have approved the pattern and construction of two electricity meters for use generally for the measurement of electrical quantity when supplied on the constant pressure continuous current system, and of one meter for use in certain Metropolitan districts for the measurement of electrical quantity when supplied on the alternating current system. There is no statutory provision that such meters shall be submitted periodically to a local authority for testing purposes. Under the Provisional Orders granted under the Electric Lighting Acts it devolves on local electric inspectors to certify meters used otherwise than by agreement to be correct, and to be of some pattern and construction approved by the Board of Trade. This being so, there is no question of margin of error allowed by the Board of Trade.

GAS METERS.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the approval of the Board of Trade for any particular gas meter is understood to cover the use of that meter through an indefinite time, or whether it is necessary for the gas company to submit its meters periodically to any local authority for re-inspection and approval?

MR. RITCHIE: Under the Sale of Gas Act 1859, the duty of testing gas meters is imposed not on the Board of Trade but upon inspectors appointed by the local authorities. The Statute does not provide that meters shall be re-tested at stated intervals, but it is open to gas companies or consumers to send the meters at any tine to be re-tested by the inspector.

AUSTRALIAN COLONIES (FEDERAL CONVENTION).

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, (1) whether he has observed that Queensland has appointed no delegates to, and intends taking no part in, the approaching Federal Convention of the Australian Colonies; (2) whether, in view of the fact that there is no prospect of early relief to the inhabitants of the Central Division of that colony by means of federation, he will reconsider the representations of the people of Central Queensland, through their Parliamentary representatives, requesting the exercise of the reserved right of the Crown to create a new colony in that division of Australia; and, (3) whether, in reference to his statement of 10th August 1896, he has examined the precedents bearing on the subject?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. I have had no official information on the subject, but the newspaper reports are no doubt correct. In answer to the second question, I have to say that if there is no prospect of early relief by means of federation, that position will be mainly due to the voluntary action of the colony in refusing to take part in the federal convention. In his third question the hon. Member is doubtless referring to the separation of Queensland from New South Wales, but he must remember that in that case Her Majesty had power under an Act of Parliament to create the new colony. Parliament has not given to Her Majesty similar power in regard to the sub-division of Queensland.

POST OFFICE ACCOMMODATION (THURLES, COUNTY TIPPERARY).

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the attention of the Department has been called to the wholly inadequate accommodation provided by the building at present used for postal and telegraphic business in the town of Thurles, county Tipperary, and to the considerable public inconvenience thereby occasioned; and, whether early steps will be taken to provide a better building and more suitable accommodation?

*MR. HANBURY: The attention of the Department has been called to the inadequacy of the accommodation provided by the building used for the post office at Thurles, and inquiry is being made as to the best means of obtaining improved accommodation. But I regret that as yet it has not been practicable to formulate a definite scheme.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any official inquiry has been held into the circumstances connected with the recent loss of the Daunt's Rock lightship *Puffin* with all hands; whether, when some repairs to this vessel were executed some time ago at Passage, a report was made that the expenditure of a large additional sum would be necessary to render her seaworthy; whether, afterwards, when returning to Daunt's Rock after being repaired at Kingstown, the *Puffin* was found to be leaking badly, and had to put back; who was responsible for the last repairs executed to the *Puffin*, and when they were executed; and whether any conclusion has been come to as regards the cause of the disaster?

MR. RITCHIE: No official inquiry has been held into the circumstances connected with the loss of the lightship in question. I have communicated with the Commissioners of Irish Lights with regard to the remainder of the hon. Member's question, and am informed that (*a*) no report was made that the expenditure of a large additional sum would be necessary to render the vessel seaworthy; (*b*) the lightship, a few hours after leaving Kingstown Harbour in tow of the *Princess Alexandra*, was brought back in consequence of a leak in the hawse pipe above the water-line; a report of the occurrence was made to the Commissioners, a survey held, and the leak repaired; (*c*) the officers of the Commissioners of Irish Lights were responsible for the last repairs to the vessel, which were executed by the Queenstown and Passage Docks Company at Rushbrooke, Co. Cork, in the winter 1895–6; (*d*) no conclusion as to the cause of the disaster has been yet arrived at. The question of raising the wreck, which would be an expensive operation, is at present under consideration.

MR. MAURICE HEALY asked whether it was not the fact that if this ship had belonged to the ordinary mercantile marine an inquiry would have been held as a matter of course into the cause of the wreck, and why, because the *Puffin* belonged to the Dublin Docks Board an inquiry was to be dispensed with?

MR. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) inquired whether the repairs of the leakage just referred to were executed while the ship was riding at anchor in the harbour, her bow being simply lifted out of the water.

MR. RITCHIE said he had no information as to the repairs, but if the learned Member would put another question on the paper he would be glad to make further inquiry. With regard to the Supplementary question of the learned Member for Cork, the rule in the mercantile marine was that there was no inquiry held when a vessel and the whole of the crew were lost. The reason was obvious; there was not sufficient data for the holding of an inquiry, so the answer he had given would have been equally applicable if the ship had belonged to the mercantile marine.

MR. MAURICE HEALY asked whether it was in the discretion of the department to hold an inquiry or not?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes.

MR. MAURICE HEALY inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of holding an inquiry.

MR. RITCHIE said he had said nothing to lead the hon Gentleman to suppose no inquiry would be held. The first question to be determined was whether the wreck should be raised or not. If it was raised there might be some evidence to show how it was it was wrecked. The raising of the ship would cost several thousands of pounds. However, he was by no means saying that if the wreck was not raised there would be no further inquiry.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many applications have been made to the Land Commission under Sections 46 and 47 respectively of the recent Land Act (relating to evicted tenants); and whether any evicted tenants have so far been re-instated under those clauses?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: No applications have been received under the 46th Section of the Land Law Act of 1896, but 369 applications under the 47th Section of the Act have been received up to December 31st last. No evicted tenants have yet been re-instated under the latter section.

SYRIA AND MACEDONIA.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Papers promised in the second paragraph of the Queen's Speech with regard to the present condition of the Ottoman Empire will include, in addition to those referring to Armenia, Crete, and Constantinople, any Papers respecting Syria and Macedonia?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. George Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): The Blue-books will include Papers respecting Syria. The recent correspondence respecting Macedonia contains little information of importance: and there would seem to be no advantage in laying it.

POLITICAL PRISONERS IN TURKEY.

Mr. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any statements have been received from Sir Philip Currie regarding the number of political prisoners, both Christian and Moslem, who are at present in Turkish prisons or exiled to Arabia without trial or after sham trials; and, if not, whether it will be possible to obtain the information?

Mr. CURZON: An Imperial Irade for the release of political prisoners was issued on December 22nd, exception being made of those already condemned to death, who were to be imprisoned in fortresses and released gradually. On January 4th the Representatives of the Powers at Constantinople addressed a joint communication to the Porte pointing out that up to December 30th only some 100 out of the 500 Armenian prisoners in Constantinople had been released, and that some of these had been sent away into the interior, while in many places in the provinces the local authorities had declined to carry out the liberation. At a later date the Porte replied that all the Armenian prisoners in the capital had now been released, and that the strictest orders to the same effect had been sent to the provincial authorities. The latest reports which have been received from Her Majesty's Consular Officers in Asia Minor, which are, however, of rather earlier date, show that in some districts there remained no political prisoners, and that in others liberation was proceeding gradually. A considerable amount of information on the subject will be found in the Blue-books which will shortly be laid.

ERASMUS SMITH SCHOOLS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, do the Government intend to do anything to fulfil the promises made by his predecessor and himself in regard to removing the Catholic grievance in regard to the Erasmus Smith Schools, owing to the judicial difference between Lord Justice Fitzgibbon and the right hon. Mr. Justice O'Brien; and what is the total annual value of this foundation which the Catholics have been shut out from?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland has requested me to say that no change has taken place since last year of a nature which would lead him to believe that legislation on the subject of the Erasmus Smith endowments in the direction indicated would no longer be opposed. He regrets, therefore, that he cannot add anything to his replies of last Session. The gross income of the Governors of these Schools is stated to have been for the year ended 1st May, 1896, the sum of £7,618 17s. 10d.

GOVERNMENT VALUATION (COUNTY CLARE).

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government Valuation Office recently increased the valuation of a blacksmith named Thomas O'Halloran, in Tulla, County Clare, from £3 10s. to £9, because he put up an open shed in front of his forge, which, with his house, was only valued at £3 10s.; is he aware that this increase of valuation by £6 involves an annual increase in rates of £1 6s.; was any notice of the rise given to the blacksmith to enable an appeal to be lodged; and, is there any supervising authority to check the revisor's action?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: The rateable valuation of these premises was increased, as stated, from £3 10s. to £9, involving an increase in rates to the extent mentioned in the second paragraph. The necessity for a revision of the valuation in this case was brought before the Commissioner of Valuation by the Clerk of the Union, in accordance with the Act 17 Vic. Cap. 8, and notices of the receipt of the revised Valuation Lists were duly posted as required by the 15 and 16 Vic. Cap. 63, under which an appeal is provided. All important valuations of buildings or other rateable hereditaments are supervised by the Chief Valuer of the Valuation Department, or by the Commissioner of Valuation, before being issued.

PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Local Government Board have prepared the prescribed forms for Parish Council accounts, as directed by Section 58 (1) of The Local Government Act, 1894; and, if so, whether the prescribed forms of accounts will be issued generally, or on application from Parish Councils?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Local Government Board have prescribed forms of financial statement showing the receipts and expenditure of Parish Councils. They are also empowered to prescribe forms of books of accounts for Parish Councils. They have not yet issued an order as to these forms, as they deemed it desirable that they should obtain experience as to the extent of the duties undertaken by Parish Councils, and the forms of account which could be most conveniently adopted. The subject is, however, receiving the attention of the board. They have referred the matter to their Inspector of Audits, who has had several conferences with the district auditors by whom the accounts are audited. When an order is issued it will be a general order, and not an order applying to particular parishes.

SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSIONS (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what are the intentions of the Government respecting the £124,977 arrears of school grant due to Ireland under the Education Act of 1892; does he still adhere to the proposal to meet the grievance by an allocation of £10,000 a-year to the Teachers' Pension Fund; has he seen the resolution of the Teachers' Central Organisation protesting against this plan, and declaring that the Pension Fund is quite adequate to the claims of existing teachers; and what will be done in the matter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The intentions of the Government with regard to the arrears of school grant, which amount to about £66,000, as I explained last year, remain the same as were stated by me in the House on July 24th last, and involve the allocation of that amount to the Teachers' Pension Fund. I am not at present in a position to state what steps will be necessary to restore the fund to solvency, but I may state that the information in my possession is opposed to the statement to which the hon. Member refers—that the fund is "quite adequate to the claims of existing teachers."

MR. T. M. HEALY asked whether a Bill would be required, and whether the right hon. Gentleman would lay papers on the table relating to the state of the Teachers' Pension Fund?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said a Bill would not be required, it would be done by vote. He was not aware of any papers that could be laid on the table.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the amount appear on the Estimates of the present year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that so much as would be voted in this year would, of course, appear on the Estimates.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a Supplementary Estimate will be presented to Parliament providing in respect of the year 1896–7 for the annual grant of £10,000 a-year to the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; whether the Committee appointed to inquire into the administration of the Pension Fund has yet reported, and whether its report will be laid before the House without delay; and whether the fund is actuarially sufficient to meet the claims of existing teachers?

*MR. HANBURY: Yes, sir, a supplementary Estimate will be presented. The report of the Committee has been received. It is proposed to defer any partial statement as to the opinions of the Committee until its report is in the hands of hon. Members.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (AUDIT DEPARTMENT).

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, whether the Scotch Department has received representations from parish councils against the excessive charges made by the auditors appointed under the Local Government Act in Scotland; and, whether the Local Government Board is considering the expediency of establishing an Audit Department corresponding to that under which the accounts of other local authorities in Scotland are audited?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): Representations of the kind referred to have been received and are engaging the attention both of the Secretary for Scotland and the Local Government Board. The hon. Member is aware that the system of which complaint is now made was established under the Act of 1894, and that there is no audit department in the sense which seems to be implied in the question. The Secretary for Scotland cannot as yet announce what course it will become his duty to take in regard to the matter.

PORT CHARGES (DUBLIN).

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, have the Dublin Port and Docks Board submitted to the Irish Office a private Bill giving them power to levy additional taxation on merchants and consumers using the Port of Dublin, and do the Government intend to support these proposals?

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, has the attention of the Government been drawn to the provisions in the proposed Dublin Port and Docks Bill to impose dues not only on imports into but on exports from the city of Dublin; has his attention been called to the recent meetings held by the mercantile community in that city to protest against these provisions; and will the Government, before any expense is incurred on either side, intimate its intention to oppose them?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: In answer to this, and the question of the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin, I beg to say that the Bill referred to has only been submitted to the Irish Office within the last few days. The Bill which is lengthy and complicated, is at present being considered by the Irish Government in conjunction with the Board of Trade. Meetings have, I believe, been held in Ireland for the purpose mentioned in the second paragraph of the latter question. Having regard to what I have stated, the hon. Member for the College Green Division will not, I hope, expect me to give an answer to the third paragraph of the question.

LIMERICK MILITARY BARRACKS.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if, in accordance with the expressed desire of the local authorities, he will expedite the new works at the Military Barracks, Limerick, so that the Royal Irish Regiment may as speedily as possible return to its station in that city?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The repairs and alterations at Limerick Barracks are well in hand, and it is expected that they will be completed, as required by the contract, by the end of the present financial year.

FLOGGING PRISONERS.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is true that the prisoner Almond, who, through defects in the Carlisle Prison arrangements, succeeded last month in making his escape, was, after his recapture, unmercifully flogged, as reported in the public Press, and that his screams were heard all over the gaol, and having regard to the absence of any personal violence in the offence committed, what was the exact punishment inflicted on Almond after his return to prison, and by whose order and authority was it carried out; and, if such punishment is lawful, whether any steps are proposed to be taken to prevent the repetition of flogging in any similar cases that may arise in the future?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The case of this prisoner, who effected his escape by cutting through the bar of his window with a file, was referred to the Visiting Committee to be dealt with under the powers conferred upon them by the Prison Acts; and they in the exercise of their discretion, and having regard especially to the fact that in addition to his escape he was also charged with repeated offences against prison discipline, and his character was bad, decided to order him 18 lashes. The allegations as to the screams of the prisoner are unfounded; he uttered no sound and suffered no ill-effects—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh"]—but was able at once to dress himself and go about his work. The punishment was legal, and I have no power to interfere with the discretion of the Justices which is vested in them by law, though, as a rule, a mere attempt at escape if unaccompanied by aggravating circumstances would not be punished by flogging.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Had the prisoner been previously punished for the other breaches of discipline?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, sir, certainly not. The Visiting Justices, in the exercise of their discretion, took into consideration the other offences committed, and inflicted this punishment.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Under what law are the Visiting Justices invested with this power?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Under the last Prisons Act; I forget the exact date of it.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): May I ask whether any punishment has been inflicted on the officials who allowed this man to escape? ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. J. A. PEASE: Has a Judge the power to inflict this punishment in any other case than one of violence?

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) asked whether any of those previous offences which were taken into account were cases of violence?

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): How long previously had those offences been committed?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am afraid I am hardly able to answer all these questions. [*Laughter.*] I satisfied myself, in the first place, that the Visiting Committee had legal power to do what they did, and, as I have said, they did it in consideration of the prisoner being of bad character, and having committed other offences against discipline, which they punished at the same time as they punished the escape. I have also said that in the case of escape without violence the punishment of flogging would not be usual, and in my opinion would not be proper. ["Hear, hear!"]

DISTRESS (WEST DONEGAL).

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the distress prevailing in many districts of Western Donegal, he will say when the commencement of the works of the promised light railways in that part of the country may be expected; and, whether any other public works, such as the improvement of piers and landing places on the coast, are likely to be speedily undertaken by the Government?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: Inquiry is being made as to the alleged prevalence of distress in many districts of West Donegal, and I would ask the hon. Member to postpone the question until Monday, when I hope to be able to reply to all his inquiries.

EDUCATION FEE GRANT (IRELAND).

MR. VESEY KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether information has been, or will be, supplied to the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland showing the amount of any supplementary Estimate for the purposes of the English Education Fee Grant for 1896–97, in order to enable the Commissioners to frame a proportionate Supplementary Estimate, if they should think that course desirable; and, whether information has been, or will be, supplied to the Commissioners showing the proposed English Estimate for 1897–98?

*Mr. HANBURY: The hon. Member's question assumes that the Irish grant for 1896–97 is proportionate to the English grant. If this was the case it might be necessary to ask for information as to the English grant, though of course the inquiry should be addressed to the Education Department, not to the Treasury. He must, however, be aware that the system was changed a year ago, and that the Irish grant for 1896–97 is not an equivalent grant, but a capitation grant, based, as in the rest of the United Kingdom, on the average attendance in the schools of the country. The Irish Commissioners could only require a Supplementary Estimate if it appears that the average attendance was under-estimated when the original Estimate was fixed, and that is information which they themselves alone possess.

TELEGRAPH SERVICE (IRELAND).

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that frequent complaints have been received from the manager of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway as to the delay and non-delivery of telegrams addressed from local offices to his address in Ballinamore; and that serious dislocations of the railway traffic have been caused by these breakdowns in the telegraph service; and whether, in view of the great risks and inconvenience to the public, he will make strict inquiries into the complaints with a view to providing a remedy?

*Mr. HANBURY: Some complaints of delay to telegrams have been received from the manager of the Cavan and Leitrim Railway Company. The cause of the delay in each case has been explained to that gentleman, but the Postmaster General will cause further inquiry to be made with a view to ascertain whether any improvement in the arrangements is possible.

SHUTTLE GUARDS.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department—(1) whether his attention has been drawn to the case of David Poyson, of Marsden, near Huddersfield, who on the 21st December last was struck on the head by a shuttle whilst at work in the mill of Messrs. James Crowther & Sons, Marsden, and who died a day or two afterwards from the effect of the blow, which caused a compound compressed fracture of the skull; (2) is he aware that Mr. Sykes, solicitor, on behalf of Messrs. Crowther & Sons, said that his clients had decided to do what they could in the way of getting shuttle guards to prevent such untoward results; and (3) whether it is now, owing to a recent decision, compulsory on all manufacturers to provide their looms with shuttle guards; and if this be the case, will factory inspectors be instructed in future to insist on these provisions against loss of life and eyesight?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The answer to the first two paragraphs of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the third, the recent decision to which the hon. Member refers requires manufacturers to provide guards for shuttles which are shown to be dangerous, and enables the factory inspectors to continue the course, which has been pursued with considerable success, of requiring all dangerous shuttles to be properly guarded.

INDIA—FAMINE AND PLAGUE.

Sir ANDREW SCOBLE (Hackney, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what steps have been taken by the Government of Bombay to deal with the bubonic plague now prevalent in that Presidency; and whether he has approved of the measures which have been adopted?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): The extreme gravity of the subject to which my hon. Friend's

Question refers will justify me in making a longer reply than is usual to ordinary Questions. ["Hear, hear!"] The plague was identified at Bombay in September last. On the 2nd of October wide powers were conferred on the chief executive officer of the city, who is a Government official, to take whatever measures were found necessary to prevent the epidemic from spreading. Large sums of money were voted for the purpose by the Corporation. The Government appointed a special Medical Committee to investigate and advise; scientific experts came from other parts of India to report upon the disease and its prevention; while additional medical men and a large staff of workers were employed to carry out at once the special sanitary measures in Bombay advocated by the Committee of experts. The epidemic appeared to be abating in November, but from the 1st of December it grew more severe. The plague spread to Karachi in December, and is now suspected to be epidemic in Poona. Over 2,500 plague deaths have occurred in Bombay, over 300 in Karachi, and about 100 sporadic cases elsewhere. As the House is aware from newspaper telegrams, the plague has caused much terror among the people of Bombay and in the adjacent country, but the disease has not so far appeared in epidemic form at any place besides Poona outside the cities of Bombay and Karachi. The sporadic cases of which I spoke, excepting at Poona, occurred almost entirely among fugitives from the two plague-stricken cities. The efforts of the Government and of the corporation, between whom hearty co-operation exists, were devoted to relieving sufferers from the plague, to checking its extension in Bombay and Karachi, and to preventing its spread elsewhere. Hospital space was increased, special plague hospitals were provided for six different sections of the community and are being prepared for two other sections. House-to-house visitation of infected quarters is being carried out under medical supervision. Every suspected case of plague that is not at once removed to the hospital is isolated as far as practicable. Every house where a plague case has occurred is disinfected, and is, as far as possible, vacated, temporary accommodation being provided elsewhere. Insanitary houses are pulled down, in others partitions are removed or ventilation introduced. Special sanitary precautions and improvements have been carried out in the backward parts of Bombay city. A fuller staff of doctors and Indian medical men is being organised, and the Bombay Government will indent on England for a temporary staff of doctors and nurses, if more aid is required. To prevent the spread of the plague to other parts of India, passengers leaving Bombay, Karachi, or Poona by rail, road, or sea, are inspected by medical officers, and persons travelling or alighting at the larger stations are stopped and removed for treatment if they are suspected of being plague stricken. In case pilgrims to the Moslem holy places might carry plague into the Red Sea, the Government of India have—as empowered by law—declared that from February 1 Bombay and Karachi shall cease for the present to be ports of departure for pilgrims. The Bombay Government report that the corporations are granting all necessary funds, while the executive and medical officers there and elsewhere are doing all that can be done, though prompt suppression of the epidemic has not been attained. The Government of India report their belief that the arrangements at railway stations for checking the spread of disease are working well; but they are inquiring whether further measures are needed, which, if necessary, will be given. I believe that these remedial and precautionary measures are daily becoming more stringent and more effective; neither self-sacrificing work nor money is being stinted. If it has been difficult to secure the co-operation of some sections of the Indian population to promote the sanitary and preventive measures for the arrest and stamping out of this pestilence, yet in other quarters loyal assistance and effective self-help have been displayed. I am hopeful that the continuous energy and vigilance shown by the Government and the local authorities, and the rigorous measures they have adopted, are beginning to make real impression upon that epidemic, and that we may for the future note its decline. I should add that the experts some time back expressed the view that during the winter months some increase in the epidemic might be expected. As

I came into the House I received a telegram from the Governor of Bombay to the effect that he learns that alarmist and greatly exaggerated telegrams in reference to plague are being sent from Bombay, and he hopes that great caution will be shown before accepting the information as true. Only four pure Europeans have died of the plague, including a doctor and a nurse. Amongst the dock labourers and Port Trust servants, the deaths and sickness are very small indeed.

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff) asked whether the noble Lord was aware that both the Sanitary Commissioner and the Health Officer of Bombay had frequently protested against the imperfect sanitary arrangement of that city, and whether any measures had been taken to remedy an admitted evil?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I understand that as far as practicable efforts are made to improve the sanitary conditions of the native quarters, but I am afraid until the epidemic is over it will not be possible to embark on a wholesale measure for that purpose.

SIR ANDREW SCOBLE asked the Secretary of State for India a question of which he had given him private notice—namely, whether he could give the House any recent information as to the number of persons employed on relief works in India?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The latest telegram I have received on the subject is from the Viceroy and is dated January 22. It reads as follows:—

> "Famine. Rain during week in affected districts, from one to three inches in Punjab except the Delhi division, few light showers elsewhere. Condition of standing crops fair to good in Central Provinces, Behar, North-West Provinces, except in Bundelkhand districts. In affected districts of Bombay, crops are suffering from want of rain. Prices have fallen slightly in Northern Punjab, stationary elsewhere. On relief:—Punjab, 70,000; North-Western Provinces, 795,000; Central India, 42,000; Rajputana, 28,000; Bengal, 278,000; Burma, 30,000; Madras, 29,000; Bombay, 265,000; Central Provinces, 211,000; total, 1,750,000. In Bombay apparent increase due in part to omission of non-working children in former reports."

BOER GOVERNMENT (LEGISLATION AGAINST ALIENS).

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government have addressed any remonstrance to the Boer Government against the repressive legislation passed by the Volksraad since August last, viz., against the Aliens Expulsion Law, the Press Law, and the Aliens Immigration Law; whether these laws constitute a breach of the Convention of 1884; and, whether the text of such protests and the replies of the Boer Government can be laid before Parliament.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Her Majesty's Government have been in communication with the South African Republic with regard to its recent legislation, but the correspondence is still incomplete. When it is terminated I propose to lay the papers before Parliament, but until that time arrives I am unable to make any further statement.

CHOLERA OUTBREAK (STEAMSHIP "NUBIA").

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, on the arrival of the steamship *Nubia* at Plymouth with cholera on board, his Department and the Port Sanitary Authority found that their powers under the provisions of the existing law were quite sufficient to meet the emergency; and whether any necessity arose for any quarantine regulations?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The *Nubia*, which arrived in Plymouth on January 9, was reported to have cholera on board, some cases having already proved fatal. One of the Board's medical inspectors was immediately instructed to go to Plymouth and to place himself in relation with the Port Sanitary Authority and the Port Medical Officer of Health. In all some 13 cases and four deaths occurred. The action taken was that laid down in the order of the Board as to cholera; and owing to the excellent arrangements prepared long in advance by the Plymouth Port Authority, isolation of the sick was at once carried out; the healthy passengers were allowed, on giving their addresses, to proceed to their respective homes; and the ship, after the requisite measures of disinfection, was allowed to continue her voyage to th

Port of London. The troops were transferred to shore under the direction of the military authorities. No extension of the disease occurred to any persons beyond those attacked on board, and the results fully justify the action which is taken in this country of dealing with diseases of foreign importation by means of isolation and disinfection, and without resort to any such measures of quarantine as are involved in the detention of healthy persons either in hospital or in an infected vessel.

CARRIAGE OF ANIMALS (CHANNEL TRAFFIC).

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will introduce a Bill to insure the more humane cross channel transit of live stock, by making the shipping companies liable under the Carriers Act for injuries to animals caused by careless handling and insufficient fittings?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): So far as I know there is no intention to introduce legislation on this subject.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (IRELAND).

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will introduce a Bill to fix a rate from which shall be available the expenditure necessary to insure the compulsory attendance of children at school in Ireland?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: Yes, sir. The Government have prepared, and hope to introduce this Session, a Bill which will define the rate from which the expenses of School Attendance Committees appointed under the Irish Education Act, 1892, shall be defrayed.

IRISH CANALS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will inquire into the working of Irish canals with a view to their purchase, to be given as free waterways for commercial traffic?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: As at present advised, the Government do not propose to adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member.

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will bring in a Bill to reconstruct the Irish Lights Board?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I must ask the hon. Member, in accordance with the course taken last session, to be good enough to address his Question to the President of the Board of Trade, whose department is more immediately concerned with the matter than the Irish Government.

MR. FIELD: Then I will ask the President of the Board of Trade Question 34.

MR. RITCHIE: I don't know what is the Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had better give notice.

MR. RITCHIE (after reading the Question): No sir, I have no intention of bringing in a Bill of the kind at present.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether time will alter his intention?

MR. RITCHIE: I am afraid, not belonging to the country of the hon. Gentleman, I cannot answer that Question.

ARMY FOREIGN MEAT SUPPLIES.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he has received any complaints as to the insufficiency of quantity of foreign meat supplied to the troops; and, whether representations have been made that they prefer to be supplied with the same quantity of native meat.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): No complaint or representation as to the insufficiency of foreign meat supplied to the troops or as to their preference for native-grown meat has been received at the War Office.

CONSOLIDATION OF IRISH ACTS.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he proposes this year to introduce any Bill consolidating Irish Acts; and whether, if the legal assistance at present available for work of this kind at the Irish Office is not sufficient, he will make representations to the Treasury to have the necessary assistance provided?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: The whole matter is at present under the consideration of the Irish Government, but, at this period of the Session, I cannot give any definite pledge that legislation on the subject will be introduced this year.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (MARRIED WOMEN) ACT.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of extending the provisions of The Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act, 1895, to Ireland?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: I shall be happy to consider the advisability of extending the statutes referred to to Ireland.

EDUCATION BILL (POOR SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICTS).

***Sir CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to again propose to give help in the Education Bill to the poor school board districts, to which help was to have been given by Clause 4 of the Government Bill of last year; and, in the event of its not being the intention of the Government to propose such help in the Bill of the present year, whether the title chosen for the Bill will shut out Amendments on the subject from being proposed to the House?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I do not think it would be desirable in answer to a question to make any statement as to the framework or details of a Bill not yet introduced.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I observe that last night there was a vote on the Paper for a Committee to consider the authorising of the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament of grants in aid of voluntary schools and for repealing so much of Section 19 of the Elementary Education Act, 1876, as imposes a limit on the Parliamentary grant to elementary schools in England and Wales. I observe on the Order Book to-day a notice to take that Committee, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman before that Committee is taken whether he will lay on the Table the terms of it.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I will inquire into the practice on this matter, but I believe it is not in accordance with the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman. If I am wrong I will certainly propose what is usual in such circumstances.

***Sir C. DILKE**: Has the right hon. Gentleman considered whether the use of the word "voluntary" will shut out the other matters from discussion?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I don't think I can answer a question of order.

***Sir C. DILKE**: May I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether on a Bill dealing with voluntary schools it would be in order to raise any case except that of voluntary schools?

Mr. SPEAKER: I should prefer not to answer a hypothetical question of that kind until I see what is really before the House. [*Ministerial laughter and cheers.*]

SECRET SERVICE FUND.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the further investigations which the Government propose to make into the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland will include an examination into the amount of the Secret Service Fund used in connection with the Government of Ireland since the Union?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I said yesterday that it would be inconvenient to answer questions with regard to the Commission until I am in a position to state what the terms of reference are.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (ENGLAND AND IRELAND).

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to propose the re-appointment of the Select Committee on the Financial Relations between the Three Kingdoms, that Committee never having reported upon the subject referred to them?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No, Sir. As I have already stated, the matter is going before a Commission, and under these circumstances the Government will not appoint a Committee to deal with the same subject.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (WEDNESDAY SITTINGS).

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, as affecting the days Members might select for setting down Bills for second reading, if there was any truth in the statement in *The Times* that the Government had an intention to ask for Wednesdays for Government business?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said, there was no present intention of this. Of course, if the Debate on the Address was extended over many days that Debate would proceed continuously, and so the Bills of private Members would suffer, but the Government had no present intention of asking for Wednesdays.

MOTIONS.

The following Bills were presented and Read the First time:—

PREFERENTIAL PAYMENTS IN BANKRUPTCY ACT (1888) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Law regarding Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy ordered, to be brought in by Mr. Kemp, Mr. Ascroft, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Ernest Spencer, Mr. John Burns, Colonel Mellor, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Clare, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Platt-Higgins; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 4.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, and to make better provision for the restoration of evicted tenants in Ireland to their holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Healy, Mr. Edward Barry, Mr. Engledow, Mr. Thomas B. Curran, and Mr. John Hammond; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 5.]

MINES (EIGHT HOURS).

Bill to limit the Working Hours in Mines to eight hours per day from bank to bank, ordered to be brought in by Mr. William Allen, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Scott, Sir William Foster, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Birrell, Mr. Walter Abraham, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Philip Stanhope, and Mr. Nussey; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 5th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 6.]

BURIALS.

Bill to further amend the Burial Laws, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cameron, Mr. Channing, Sir George Osborne Morgan, Mr. Perks, Mr. Carvell Williams, and Mr. Woodall; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 7.]

SERVICE FRANCHISE.

Bill to amend the Service Franchise, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Marks, Sir John Blundell Maple, Captain Jessel, Mr. Fardell, Mr. Boulnois, and Mr. Harry Samuel; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 28th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 8.]

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE).

Bill to grant certificates to Persons in Charge of Steam Engines and Boilers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Samuel, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Helder, Colonel Denny, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), and Mr. Paulton; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 9.]

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE (MARKS).

Bill for the purpose of Marking Articles of Agricultural Produce imported into the United Kingdom, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wingfield-Digby, Mr. Mildmay, Mr. Jeffreys, Sir A. Acland-Hood, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Plunkett, Sir Mark Stewart, and Mr. Lambert; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 7th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 10.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN).

Bill for extending the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Faithfull Begg, Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Jebb, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Macdona, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. William Johnston, Mr. Atherley-Jones, and Mr. Justin M'Carthy; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 11.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland on Saturdays and Sundays, and for other purposes connected therewith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lecky, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. William Johnston, Mr. Jordan, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Arnold-Forster, and Mr. Blake; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 12th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 12.]

LAND TENURE (WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE).

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Vaughan-Davies, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Rees-Davies, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Lloyd Morgan; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 19th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 13.]

BOILER INSPECTION AND REGISTRATION.

Bill to provide for the Inspection and Registration of Boilers, ordered to be brought in by Sir Edward Gourley, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Maclean, Mr. Scott, Mr. Fenwick, Colonel Denny, and Mr. Clare; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 5th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 14.]

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION.

Bill for the National Registration of Plumbers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Knowles, Earl Compton, Mr. Dixon, and Dr. Farquharson; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd March, and to be printed.—[Bill 15.]

ELECTION PETITIONS.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Election Petitions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wootton Isaacson, Sir Benjamin Stone, Sir Edward Gourley, Admiral Field, Colonel Foster, Mr. H. M. Stanley, Dr. Robert Ambrose, Mr. Richards, Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 31st March, and to be printed.—[Bill 16.]

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL.

Bill for the creation of a Court of Criminal Appeal, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Richardson, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 17.]

BENEFICES.

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Admission to and the Avoidance and Resignation of Benefices, and to amend the Pluralities Act, 1838, and the Pluralities Acts Amendment Act, 1885, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Willox, Viscount Cranborne, Sir Edward Clarke, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Jebb, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sydney Gedge, Mr. Cripps, and Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 26th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 18.]

ARCHDEACONRY OF LONDON (ADDITIONAL ENDOWMENTS).

Bill to make further provision for the Endowment of the Archdeaconry of London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alban Gibbs, Sir Reginald Hanson, Mr. Lough, and Mr. Macdona; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 19.]

COAL MINES REGULATION.

Bill to amend the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. William Allen, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Yoxall, Mr. M'Kenna, and Mr. Randell; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed.—[Bill 20.]

RATING OF MACHINERY SUSPENSORY.

Bill to authorise the continuance for a limited time of existing methods of ascertaining the gross annual value of certain descriptions of rateable hereditaments, ordered to be brought in by Mr. George Whiteley, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Cawley, Colonel Mellor, Mr. Ascroft, and Mr. Tomlinson; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 21.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO.

Bill to enable localities by a direct vote to prevent the issue of Licences for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Whittaker, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Jonathan Samuel, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Allison, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), and Mr. Pickersgill; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 14th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 22.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAYS.

Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Arthur Pease, Mr. Perks, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Cameron, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Firbank, and Mr. Doughty; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 23.]

CEMETERIES RATING.

Bill to amend the Law with regard to the Rating of certain Cemeteries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stephens, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Bigwood, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Howard, Captain Bowles, and Mr. Carvell Williams; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 24.]

STREET NOISES.

Bill to regulate and control Street Music and other Street Noises, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Radcliffe Cooke, Mr. Jacoby, General Goldsworthy, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Pierpoint, Mr. Duncombe, and Mr. Fardell; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 2nd June, and to be printed.—[Bill 25.]

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (VACATION OF SEATS).

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Vacation of Seats by Members of Parliament accepting offices of profit under the Crown, ordered to be brought in by Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Joseph A. Pease, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. George Whiteley, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Giles, and Captain Phillpotts; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 31st March, and to be printed.—[Bill 26.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

Bill to amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Spicer, Mr. Burt, Mr. Doxford, Mr. Johnson-Ferguson, Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, Sir George Osborne Morgan, and Mr. Renshaw; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 27.]

RATING OF MACHINERY.

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Rating Herditaments containing Machinery, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Strachey, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir William Coddington, Mr. Batty Langley, Mr. Oldroyd, Colonel Mellor, and Mr. Cawley: to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd March, and to be printed.—[Bill 28.]

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT).

Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Registration of Voters for Parliamentary Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brigg, Sir John Leng, Sir Walter Foster, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. George Whiteley, and Mr. Strachey; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 29.]

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON (ELECTIONS).

Bill to alter the divisions of London for the Election of the School Board, ordered to be brought in by Sir Blundell Maple, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, and Mr. Harry Samuel; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 28th April, and to be printed. —[Bill 30.]

PENSIONS (OLD AGE).

Bill to provide Pensions for Poor Persons over the age of sixty-five years, ordered to be brought in by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Alfred Thomas, Mr. Logan, and Mr. Lambert; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 26th May, and to be printed. —[Bill 31.]

BOROUGH FUNDS.

Bill to amend the Borough Funds Act, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir John Leng, Mr. Bigham, and Mr. Whiteley; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 5th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 32.]

RATING (PLACES OF WORSHIP AND SCHOOLS).

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Rating of Places of Worship and Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Walford Davis Green, Mr. Clough, Mr. Owen, Mr. Parkes, and Mr. Perks; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 31st March, and to be printed.—[Bill 33.]

BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND LABOURERS (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the constitution of Boards of Guardians in Ireland, and to extend their powers under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, and in other respects, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Murnaghan, Sir Albert Rollit, Captain Donelan, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Doogan, and Mr. Daly; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 7th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 34.]

VEHICLES (LIGHTS).

Bill to require Vehicles on Highways to carry Lights after Dark, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Thornton, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Pym, Mr. Sharpe, Mr. Abel Smith, Mr. Lucas-Shadwell, and Mr. Ernest Gray; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 35.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Municipal Franchise in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Engledow, Captain Donelan, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. John Hammond, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 28th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 36.]

LAND VALUES (TOWNS) ASSESSMENT.

Bill to provide for the Assessment of Land Values in Towns, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harrison, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Channing, Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Kearley, and Mr. Lough; to be read a Second time upon Wednesday, 12th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 37.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND).

Bill to enable electors to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic in their respective areas, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. Colville, Mr. Souttar, Dr. Clark, Mr. Cameron

Corbett, and Sir William Dunn; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 14th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 38.]

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND).

Bill for the better Government of Counties in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Doogan, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Captain Donelan, Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, M. McCartan, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. Daly, and Mr. Murnaghan; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 39.]

TEIND COURT (SCOTLAND).

Bill to confer additional powers on the Court of Teinds (Scotland) in reference to the transportation of parish churches and the alteration of boundaries of parishes; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Sir Mark Stewart, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Baird, and Mr. Gordon; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 7th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 40.]

PLACES OF WORSHIP (LEASEHOLD) ENFRANCHISEMENT.

Bill for the enfranchisement of the sites of leasehold Places of Worship, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Rees-Davies, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, and Mr. Abel Thomas; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 2nd June, and to be printed.—[Bill 41.]

COUNTY COURTS.

Bill to extend the jurisdiction of County Courts, and to amend the Acts relating, or giving jurisdiction thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Monk, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Alferd Hickman, and Mr. Jacoby; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 42.]

LABOUR BUREAUX.

Bill to authorise County Councils and Councils of County Boroughs to establish Labour Bureaux, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Goddard, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Logan, Mr. Robson, and Mr. Schwann; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 7th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 43.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to secure to the public the right of access to Mountains and Moorlands in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Hopkinson, Sir John Leng, and Mr. Hedderwick; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 44.]

LAW OF LIBEL AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Law of Libel, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Willox, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Maclean, and Mr. Frederick Wilson; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 5th May, and to be printed. —[Bill 45.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (PERMISSIVE RATES AID).

Bill to permit School Boards to assist Education in Voluntary Schools out of Local Rates, ordered to be brought in by Sir Arthur Forwood, Sir James Fergusson, Mr. Warr, Lord Edmund Talbot, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, and Sir Henry Howorth; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 46.]

LEASEHOLDERS PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE.

Bill to give facilities to Leaseholders for the Purchase of the Fee Simple of their Holdings, ordered to be brought in by General Laurie and Mr. Cohen; to be Read a Second time upon Friday, 12th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 47.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (NO. 2).

Bill to amend and extend the Land Law (Ireland) Acts and the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Hayden; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 48.]

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN).

Bill to enable Women to vote at Municipal Elections and for Town Commissioners in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. William Johnston, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. Lecky, Mr. Field, and Mr. Plunkett; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 2nd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 49.]

PREFERENTIAL PAYMENTS BANKRUPTCY ACT (1888) AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Bill to amend the Law regarding Workmen's Wages and other Debts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ascroft, Mr. Kemp, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Ernest Spencer, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Platt-Higgins, Mr. Atherley Jones, Colonel Mellor, Mr. Clare, and Sir Alfred Hickman; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 50.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MARINERS VOTES).

Bill to enable Officers and Seamen of the Royal Navy and Mercantile Marine and Fishermen to record their votes when by reason of their calling they will be at sea on the day of the Poll, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Elliott Lees, Mr. Richardson, Sir John

Colomb, Sir Cameron Gull, Captain Phillpotts, and Mr. Joseph A. Pease; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 28th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 51.]

MILITIA.

Bill to make better provision for the Militia, and with reference to the Law of Ballot for that Force, ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch, Mr. Brookfield, Captain Grice-Hutchinson, and Colonel Sandys; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 7th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 52.]

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Bill to establish a Catholic University in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Clancy, Mr. John Redmond, and Mr. Harrington; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 7th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 53.]

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

Bill to make provision for Evicted Tenants in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harrington, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Clancy, and Mr. O'Kelly; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 31st March, and to be printed.—[Bill 54.]

EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Education Acts, 1870 to 1891, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gedge, Mr. Abel Smith, and Colonel Milward; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 26th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 55.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN.

Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Liability of Employers for Injuries to their Workmen, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Randell, Mr. Fenwick, and Sir Charles Dilke; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 12th May, and to be printed.—[Bill 56.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) (No. 2).

Bill to amend and extend the Law relating to the Municipal Franchise in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Carew, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Field, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 57.]

POOR LAW FRANCHISE (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Law relating to the Poor Law Franchise and the Constitution of Boards of Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Luke Hayden, and Mr. William Corbet; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 28th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 58.]

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE (IRELAND)

Bill to provide for Manhood Franchise at Parliamentary Elections in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parnell, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Harrington, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; to be Read a second time upon Wednesday, 24th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 59.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings in England; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Price, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Luttrell, and Mr. Stevenson; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 19th May, and to be printed. —[Bill 60.]

GOLD AND SILVER PLATE LICENSES.

Bill to amend the Law with regard to the Licenses for Retail Dealers in Gold and Silver Plate, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Henry Richards, Mr. Massey-Mainwaring, Mr. Lough, and Mr. Field; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd March, and to be printed. —[Bill 61.]

LONDON WATER COMPANIES AMALGAMATION.

Bill to amalgamate the Water Companies in and around London, ordered to be brought in by Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Bigwood, Mr. Howard, and Mr. Stephens; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd March, and to be printed.—[Bill 62.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, ordered to be brought in by Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Brookfield, Major Rasch, Mr. Godson, Mr. Boulnois, Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, Sir Henry Howorth, Mr. Havelock Wilson, and Mr. Field; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 63.]

ASSISTANT COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Assistant County Surveyors in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Wolff, and Mr. Rentoul; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 64.]

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION.

Bill to make provision for dealing with persons suspected of having stolen property in their possession, ordered to be brought in by Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Spencer, Sir Alfred Hickman, and Mr. Godson; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 65.]

CORN SALES.

Bill to provide for greater uniformity in the weights and measures used in the Sale of Corn, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Rankin, Mr. Jasper More, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Heath, Colonel Williams, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Field, Mr. Bolitho, and Mr. Radcliffe Cooke; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 66.]

LICENSES (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Licensing (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Crilly, Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. Macaleese, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Harrington, Dr. Tanner, and Mr. Field; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 67.]

POLICE (SCOTLAND) LAW AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Pensions, Gratuities, etc., of Police Constables in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Sir Lewis M'Iver, Colonel Denny, Sir William Arrol, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. M'Killop; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 2nd June, and to be printed.—[Bill 68.]

BENEFICES (NO. 3).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Benefices of the Church of England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Sandys, Mr. Harry Foster, Mr. Cruddas, and Sir Edward Gourley; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 69.]

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING).

Bill to provide for the earlier Closing of Shops, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Sir James Fergusson, Mr. Field, Mr. Kearley, and Sir Francis Powell; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 70.]

SUNDAY CLOSING (WALES) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend The Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, and to make further provision respecting the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Alfred Thomas, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 71.]

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS.

Bill to give facilities for the acquisition by working men of their own dwellings, ordered to be brought in by Sir Howard Vincent, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Heath, and Mr. Faithfull Begg; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 72.]

ALIENS.

Bill to regulate the Immigration of Aliens, ordered to be brought in by Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Duncombe, Mr. Richards, Sir Blundell Maple, Mr. Field, and Mr. Macdona; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 73.]

SHOPS.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Shops, ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. John Burns, Dr. Clark, Mr. Davitt, Mr. Field, and Mr. Flower; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 74.]

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES.

Bill to establish a single Franchise at all Elections, and thereby to abolish University Representation, and to remove the disabilities of Women, ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. William Allen, Mr. John Burns, and Dr. Clark; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 75.]

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Davitt, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 76.]

FACTORY ACTS (FISHING TRADE).

Bill to amend the Factory Acts in relation to the Fishing Trade, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Doughty, Commander Bethell, Mr. Price, Captain Pirie, and Mr. Compton Rickett; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 77.]

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND).

Bill to admit to the School Board Electorate in the counties of Argyll, Caithness, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, and Orkney and Shetland, all persons entitled to vote for the County Council Election for the said counties, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Weir, Mr. J. E. B. Baillie, Dr. Clark, Sir Leonard Lyell, Mr. M'Leod, and Mr. Nicol; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 78.]

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend The Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, as respects female nurses appointed after the commencement of the said Act, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pym; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 3rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 79.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday next.—*(Mr. Hanbury).*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.—FOURTH DAY.]

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [21st January] to Main Question [19th January],

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—*(Viscount Folkestone:)*—

CATHOLICS OF IRELAND (UNIVERSITY EDUCATION).

And which Amendment was, at the end of the Question, to add the words,—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the Catholics of Ireland have long suffered under an intolerable grievance in respect of University Education; that the existence of this grievance has been recognised by successive Governments; and that it is the duty of the Government immediately to propose legislation with a view to placing Irish Catholics on a footing of equality with their fellow countrymen in all matters concerned with University Education."—*(Mr. Engledew.)*

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added." Debate resumed.

MR. TIMOTHY HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said he wished it to be made clear that the Irish Catholic demand was simply one of equality in the matter of University education. There was no desire on the part of the Catholic people of Ireland or the Catholic hierarchy to take away from existing institutions any privileges they now possessed. All other denominations in Ireland had ample provision made for educational training, yet the Catholics, constituting the vast majority of the people of the country, had practically no provision whatever made for them. This was not a demand on behalf of the Catholic clergy and hierarchy of Ireland alone. The question affected the Catholic laity in a greater degree, and a body representative of the laity had addressed a declaration to the Members of the House of Commons. The request made was simply that in the matter of University education the Catholics of Ireland should be placed on an equality with their Protestant fellow-countrymen. The hon. Member for South Belfast had spoken of the insatiable demands of the Catholic hierarchy. But though the claims of the Catholics had been recognised by all parties from the beginning of the century, what serious steps had ever been taken to satisfy their demands for University education. Speaking at Partick in December, 1889, the present Leader of the House said:—

"I find there are at this moment four colleges in Ireland enjoying public endowment. There is Trinity College, Dublin, and there are the Queen's colleges of Belfast, Galway and Cork. The Roman Catholic population is, I suppose, about four-fifths of the whole population. They are the poorest as well as the most numerous part of the population; yet I find that only one in seven of the existing students of those endowed colleges belongs to the Roman Catholic religion. And I find that the number in Trinity College, Dublin, is only 6 per cent of the whole; and that actually at this moment in Ireland there are enjoying the advantages of higher education in the endowed colleges less than 250 individuals in all who are Roman Catholics."

That was the cool and deliberate opinion of the First Lord of the Treasury, and no language from the Irish Members could put the situation more forcibly. The right hon. Gentleman in that speech further said:—

"Now, I say that the state of things, whosoever fault it is, whether it be the fault of the educational system or the fault of the hierarchy, at all events it is not a creditable state of things; and I, who am one of those who are desirous of seeing higher education promoted in every part of Her Majesty's dominions, cannot look on with equanimity."

That was the declaration to which he wished to pin the First Lord and the Government. When the right hon. Gentleman made that declaration he was not in so favourable a position for giving effect to his convictions as he was now; and all that was asked was that he would take immediate steps and fulfil his declaration. The hon. Member for South Belfast had urged that, as a religious test was no longer applied at Trinity College, there was no reason why Catholics should not enter. But it was vain for the House to attempt to examine the reasons which induced Catholics to keep out of the College. They could only deal with the fact as it existed. The abolition of the religious test in 1873 did something to lower the status of Trinity College, but it did nothing to meet the objections of the Catholics. They did not demand that step; and they strenuously resisted it when it was proposed in the House of Commons by Mr. Fawcett. All Irishmen were proud of the traditions of Trinity College; but if the hon. Member for South Belfast and other Protestant Irishmen had this institution for their own benefit, why should they grudge similar advantages to their Catholic fellow-countrymen? Why should Protestants deprive Catholics of all chance of competing with them in the race for life? All departments of the public service were now open to Catholics; but Protestants were endowed with the means of acquiring a University education, and the Catholics were deprived of those means. He would appeal to the hon. Member for South Belfast, whose convictions were at least sincere, to say whether this was fair. He would quote another passage from the speech of the First Lord. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "It cannot be denied, and I for one will not affect to regret it, that, by its composition, Trinity College is now what it has been always, a Protestant institution by its general flavour and complexion. I believe that not 7 per cent. of the students are Catholics. Every Sunday in the college chapel, the services of the late Established Church of Ireland are celebrated, and the theological chairs, which have done such service in the advancement of a sound and learned religion, are necessarily filled by members of the late Established Church of Ireland. You cannot ignore the fact that the whole current of thought in such an institution is and must be antagonistic to the current which would be acceptable to the large majority of the Irish people."

That was a complete expression of the whole Catholic position. The extract plainly pointed out that Trinity College was a Protestant institution which Catholics could not avail of; its whole atmosphere was Protestant, and it rejoiced in that fact. Irish Catholics had no intention of interfering with the Protestantism of Trinity College, or with its opinions. They made no demand that its great endowments should be diminished by one penny; but they asked that the Government should be just towards the great body of Irishmen, and give them the same facilities for higher education which Protestant Irishmen had enjoyed for centuries.

Mr. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Scholarships and fellowships in Trinity College are open to Roman Catholics.

Mr. HARRINGTON: Yes; but so late as the year 1854 Roman Catholics were absolutely precluded from possessing a single scholarship in Trinity College, and a late member of this House—Mr. Denis Caulfield Heron—who had actually in competition won the right to a scholarship, was precluded from taking it because he was a Catholic and could not perform the religious conditions required in the College. In the words of the First Lord of the Treasury it was a Protestant institution.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The hon. Member for Waterford was in Trinity College.

Mr. HARRINGTON: He was, and so were several Irish Catholics. He was, himself in the college too, as a student. And why? When he sought his profession at the Bar, owing to his having had to take a pretty prominent part in Irish politics, he would have had to deal with a Bar Committee which could prescribe for him everything they liked in order to disqualify him from the position he was seeking. But by becoming a student of the University of Dublin he had a right to enter the Bar without any further examination. Therefore he availed himself of Trinity College. The very cases the hon. Member opposite cited went to show how rarely Catholics in Ireland could avail themselves of the advantages of Trinity College, and how it was under circumstances of the kind he had mentioned that they were compelled to do so. But the vast majority of the people could not touch it because, in the words of the First Lord of the Treasury, it was "a Protestant institution." Last night the hon. Member for South Belfast had referred to Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1873, and he had said it was not accepted by the Bishops of

Ireland—that there was no satisfying that body.

MR. JOHNSTON: Hear, hear.

MR. HARRINGTON: But the most strenuous opposition was offered to that Bill, and he thought reasonably offered, by the senate of Trinity College. He should like also to point out to the hon. Gentleman that that Bill did not include what Ireland most urgently needed—a provision for the endowment of a Catholic University as a teaching body. There were provisions for examinations and for getting degrees. All these were provided by the Dublin University and by the Royal University. Was it not a mockery to tell the Catholics of Ireland that these two Universities are open to them for degrees, if every other section of the community possessed rich endowments for the purposes of teaching and give nothing in that way to the Catholic body? He should like to glance at the Parliamentary history of this question so far as the present Government were concerned. After the rejection of Mr. Gladstone's Bill in 1873, an Act was passed for the abolition of the religious tests in Trinity College. The Irish people didn't demand or desire that Act. They wanted a Catholic College—not a theological chair, but an endowment for a college which would enable them to give secular instruction in the college to their own students, where their faith would be safe. Then there was the question of the Queen's colleges. The objection of the Catholic laity in Ireland was stronger against these institutions, where no form of Christian worship was recognised, than was their objection to "a Protestant institution" like Trinity College. On July 28th, 1885, this question was brought before the House by the hon. Member for North Longford, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then also Chancellor of the Exchequer, used these memorable words:—

> "It is remarkable that a college, not directly endowed with any public money, indirectly receiving only so small an amount as the Catholic University of Dublin receives, having to provide all its buildings and apparatus, still should, in a fair competition in University education with the students of the Queen's colleges, show such surprising results as has been stated to-night. The statement which has been made appeared to me almost to require some explanation; because I cannot understand how an institution which, according to the Parliamentary returns that had been quoted, only possesses 104 students, should be able to secure so large a proportion of University degrees and honours."

He quoted these words to show that there was a burning desire on the part of the Irish people to avail of the advantages of higher education if the colleges in any way conformed to their views and convictions. In the Catholic University College, an institution without any endowment or support—an institution which for years had been appealing in vain to the House to get recognition for it to confer degrees upon its students, the Catholics of Ireland were able to compete with the Queen's colleges and practically to double them in the honours they received in every department of University education. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer went on to say on the same occasion:—

> "The hon. Member for Londonderry (Sir Charles Lewis) has expressed the hope that he will not depart from the old lines on which the whole question has been dealt with. But what are they? The lines on which it has been dealt with successfully are those of the Intermediate Education Act of 1878, and of the Royal University Act, 1879, whereby it was decided that the State should pay for the results of secular education wherever given and however obtained, quite irrespective of the circumstances, whether they were gained by private tuition in a denominational college or in a mixed college. Now these are the principles the Government ought to maintain. We shall continue to regard this question on the principle I have laid down, with the hope and the wish to do something to make University education more general and widespread in Ireland, and if it should be our lot to hold Office next Session, to make some proposal which may deal in a satisfactory way with this most important matter."

These words were delivered in the House in the Session of 1885. It was true that early in the next Session the Government went out of office, but again they assumed office at the general election of 1886, and though the Unionist Government had, with a short interval, been in office since, not one attempt had been made to redeem the promise recorded in the speech he had quoted. On the 15th July, 1889, the present First Lord of the Treasury, in reply to a question put by the late Mr. Parnell, said:—

> "The resolutions of the Standing Committee of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland have, I believe, been forwarded to the Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Treasury. I have not seen a copy until to-day. The resolutions deal with many questions, and cover the whole field

> of education in Ireland. Without giving specific answers to the various points alluded to in them, I may say that some of them—notably higher education—have long been under the consideration of the Government, and in respect of these we hope to be able to make proposals to the House."

That speech was made on the 15th July, 1889, and since then no effort had been made to redeem the promise held out. Still later in the same Session of 1889, the right hon. Gentleman, the present First Lord of the Treasury, made the following announcement on the subject:—

> "I repeat in the House what I have said outside the House, that, in my opinion, something ought to be done to give higher University education to the Roman Catholics in Ireland."

So far, therefore, as the justice of the demand was concerned, there had been the most complete recognition by the leaders of the present Unionist Party in that House. The First Lord was under no delusion as to the position, for he continued:—

> "I regret—I do not deny that I do regret—that the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland have felt it their duty to discourage men of their religion from taking full advantages of the Queen's colleges in Galway and Cork, or of Trinity College in Dublin."

The right hon. Gentleman had himself spoken of Trinity College as a Protestant institution, and that description was a justification of the position taken up by the Roman Catholic clergy, who would be unworthy to lead their people if they advised them to go into what the right hon. Gentleman had described as a Protestant institution. The right hon. Gentleman continued on that occasion:—

> "But regrets are vain things. The Roman Catholic hierarchy have thought it their duty to adopt this policy, and we have to take the facts as we find them. The experiment of undenominational higher education in Ireland has now been tried sufficiently long to make it, I am afraid, perfectly clear, that nothing Parliament has hitherto done to promote that object, will really meet the wants and wishes of the Catholic population of the country. That being so, we have no alternative but to try and devise some new scheme by which the wants of the Catholic population shall be met. This would not be the proper time for me to suggest, even in outline, the main lines of what the scheme should be; but we ought to make some attempt, if possible, to carry out a scheme of the kind I have indicated."

These promises had been repeatedly made, and Government after Government had recognised what was their duty in regard to this matter. The right hon. Gentleman in a later speech laid down three conditions without which, he held, it would be impossible for the Government to settle this question. First, he objected to founding a Catholic University, having regard to the desirability of Catholic and Protestant Irishmen competing in the race for University distinctions. But the Catholic hierarchy raised no objection to a scheme founded on that competition, but by so doing it seemed to them it would be necessary to interfere with the status of the University of Dublin. The Catholics were perfectly willing to be attached to the Dublin University so long as they had endowment for their own education, but they had no desire to force themselves on the University of Dublin or in any way to interfere with its prestige. It seemed to them that the simplest plan, and that which would give the best satisfaction in Ireland, would be to endow a Catholic University for the Catholic people of Ireland, so that they might not interfere with any other existing institution. Another condition which the right hon. Gentleman laid down was that there should be no State endowment of theological training, but there had never been any demand on the part of the Catholic hierarchy that theological training should be taught. They could themselves take care that there was a theological chair if it was necessary. He undertook to say, moreover, that there would be no objection to a conscience clause if it was desired—and that was the third objection of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say:—

> "But, subject to these three conditions, my own opinion is that we ought to give them a well equipped college—a college thoroughly well equipped for all modern purposes of higher education, in which they could learn, as I have said before, Latin, Greek, mathematics, science, medicine, and law."

That was the promise held out to them, to which the Irish people were determined to hold the right hon. Gentleman and his Government, and they looked to him, not for any further promise, but for the immediate execution of the schemes which he then foreshadowed. It was right to say that on that occasion the right hon. Gentleman spoke of other conditions; he said:—

> "It is absolutely impossible that anything should be done except by general consent."

If nothing was to be done for higher education in Ireland until all Parties in Great Britain as well as Ireland were agreed, then there was very little hope of ever satisfying the desires of the Irish people. The doctrine of satisfying the predominant partner might have some weight so long as it affected to some extent the government of the three countries, but when it was a question of providing education within one of these countries only, he thought the doctrine had no application whatsoever.

*MR. LECKY (Dublin University) said that, although he did not intend to vote for the Amendment, he hoped that in the course of the present Parliament the Government would see their way to gratify the desire of Irish Catholics to have either a University of their own, or else an endowed college connected with the Royal University. It seemed impossible to deny that the great preponderance not merely of Catholic opinion in Ireland, but of opinion amongst those Catholics who alone could send their sons to a University was in favour of an establishment of a more sectarian and ecclesiastical type than at present existed. It seemed equally evident that the number of Catholics at present enjoying a University education was very inadequate. Much allowance, no doubt, must be made for the fact that an enormous preponderance of the Catholic population of Ireland belonged to a class who were unable to afford their sons a University education, and for the fact that while Divinity students formed a large proportion of the Protestant students at the Universities, Catholic Divinity students were educated at Maynooth. Still, when all this was admitted, it remained an incontestable fact that the number of Catholic students enjoying a University education was smaller than it should be, He did not believe that this was largely due to their dislike of the existing Universities, but the influence of the priesthood in this field was a deterrent one, and if a University was set up which the priesthood actively encouraged, the number of the students would probably increase. If the Government could see their way to found a new college he could assure them that it would experience no unworthy jealousy on the part of Trinity College. Trinity College regretted that Catholic students did not come to it more freely. It regretted that they did not think the University of Moore and Sheil and the immense majority of Catholic laymen who had played the greatest part in recent Irish history good enough for them. But it recognised clearly that the time had come for some modification in the University system in Ireland, and it only wished well to the Government in the action they might take. [*Nationalist cheers.*] He said this frankly, but he could not agree with hon. Members opposite as to the extent of their grievance. In the first place, Divinity students were amply provided for at Maynooth. That college was originally set up by the Protestant Parliament of Ireland, it was enlarged by the Imperial Parliament, it received for many years a large grant from Imperial funds, and when that grant was abolished it was compensated for by a large capital sum which was not drawn, as it should have been, from Imperial sources, but from the distinctively Irish Church fund. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Maynooth was a well-endowed college, entirely and completely in the hands of ecclesiastics without any kind of meddling inspection or control on the part of anyone connected with the Government. Then came his own University—Trinity College. As far back as 1793, before the English Universities had taken such a step, Trinity College threw open her degrees to Catholics. It was a remarkable fact, illustrating its spirit, that the first great advocate of undenominational and liberal Catholic education in Ireland was Hely Hutchinson, one of its Provosts, and that one of the most powerful advocates of Catholic claims who ever appeared in the Imperial Parliament was the great Lord Plunket, Member for Trinity College, at a time when the electing body was purely Academic. In those days many Catholics entered the college, and he believed that nearly all the Catholic judges who had shed so much lustre upon the administration of the law in Ireland had been members of Trinity College. In fact, with the exception of O'Connell, there was scarcely an eminent Catholic layman who had not been educated there. A great objection, and a just one then, brought against the college was that its great honours and prizes were exclusively in the hands of Protestants. All that, he was happy to say, had been abolished. It was true that there was a Divinity school, but it stood apart from the rest of the college, and had no relation to anyone who was not reading for Anglican orders. For the rest, every post from the highest to the lowest, every honour and prize was open to every denomination in Ireland; the most zealous theological scrutiny could discern nothing in its curriculum which had the smallest sectarian tinge, and he ventured to say that the whole tone of the University, the tone of the undergraduates, as well as of the Fellows, was entirely unsectarian. As an illustration of the tone of Trinity College at the present time, he might read a letter which had been written in 1895 by a Catholic student after passing through the college. It gave a more vivid picture than he could give of actual life in the University. He said:—

> "I entered Trinity College, Dublin, as a Roman Catholic. My tutor Fellow, the late Dr. Maguire (Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University), was a Roman Catholic.
>
> "From the day I entered the college, in January 1885, until I obtained the degree of Master of Arts in June 1891, I never was asked to what religion I belonged, nor did I ever feel the slightest unpleasantness or disadvantage from any one connected with the University on account of religion. I knew the geographical position of the college chapel, but I was never in it.
>
> "I never heard any Roman Catholic graduate or undergraduate object to the Divinity school. I found that Roman Catholics are exempt from catechetical (religious) lectures and examinations as well as college chapel, and are not only eligible for all honours, prizes, medals, scholarships, moderatorships, studentships, and fellowships, etc., but are actually carrying off such distinctions from time to time. I do not believe the religion of any candidate is at all considered in the competitions. One of the present Fellows is a Roman Catholic. The list of eminent Roman Catholics on the Bench, at the Bar, medical, and, in fact, all the learned professions, show a very high percentage of T C. D. men. and the fact also remains that these men invariably send their sons and friends to the college."

Mr. Lecky.

It might, it is true, be justly objected that there was no definite religious teaching for the Catholics in Trinity College. But he did not think this was altogether its fault. An arrangement had been made under which Protestant pupils belonging to the Episcopal Church had their own catechetical lectures on religion, and certain persons were appointed to look after their spiritual wants. The college now paid Presbyterian ministers to teach the Presbyterian students, and look after their moral welfare. He believed it to be notorious that the college authorities would be delighted to make similar provision for Catholic students if the Catholics would accept it. This was the position of Trinity College. The Queen's Colleges had been condemned by the Church, but they were entirely unsectarian in their teaching. Two of them were presided over by Catholics, and every prize they could offer was open without restriction. As to the Royal University, Catholics there preponderated, and the University was set up specially in the governing body for their benefit. He would ask any fair man, any foreigner from any Catholic country, whether this state of things was one which could be reasonably described as it had been repeatedly described in this House and in Ireland, in language which would scarcely be too weak if it were applied to the persecution of Diocletian. The sum of it all was that Catholic Divinity students were entirely taught at the public expense by their own ecclesiastics, and in the secular Universities every test had been abolished; every sectarian element in the University teaching had been eliminated; every prize had been thrown open to competition regardless of creed. But he thought the time had come to go further, and he hoped the Government would soon see their way to do so. Personally, he was somewhat half-hearted on this question. In his opinion, there could be no greater misfortune for Ireland than that members of the Protestant and Catholic religions in their early days should be entirely separated; that young men, at a time when their hearts were warm, when their enthusiasms were at their height, and when they were forming friendships which might mould their future lives, were kept apart and knew nothing of each other. [*Nationalist cheers.*] Then he was sceptical whether purely sectarian education ever produced the same standard of good intellectual work as a more truly Catholic one. The first condition at Trinity College was that the whole of the teaching staff should be appointed, not by any kind of nomination or patronage, but solely by merit totally irrespective of theological opinion. But the teaching of a University did not come merely from its professors. An immense proportion came also from the stimulus of the students, and he believed the more they narrowed the area from which that competition was derived the more feeble that stimulus would become. He had an incurable prejudice against the secular education of laymen being altogether intrusted to ecclesiastics. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed if they educated young laymen more or less in the principles of a monastery, the result would be they would turn out one class of mind—credulous, emasculated, stunted and prejudiced—and another of a stronger class of mind—acidulated and exasperated, inclined to go all lengths in opposition to what they had been taught. [*Laughter.*] He was very much afraid, too, that when this Catholic University was set up, the efforts of the hierarchy to prevent students of their faith going to any other University would be even stronger that at present. Very strong coercion of this kind goes on already in Ireland. They saw, for example, a Catholic Bishop absolutely declaring he would refuse to administer the Sacrament to any Catholic who sent his children to the National Model schools, and this same Bishop shortly after saying that these schools were an imposture, as the Catholics did not go to them. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] They had seen another Catholic Bishop exercising a kind of censorship over the Press, and threatening with spiritual penalties anybody who dared to read a newspaper representing, he believed, the politics of the hon. Member who had last spoken. [*Laughter.*] He was afraid this sort of thing might extend. There was an extremely remarkable letter in the "Life of Cardinal Manning," written by Dr. Newman in 1864, in which he observed that the only chance of a Catholic college in Dublin succeeding was that there should be the most stringent ecclesiastical prohibition against any Catholic going into any other University either in Ireland or in England. He was happy to say that lately in England there had been some relaxation of that spirit, and he thought it a hopeful sign that in Oxford, at all events, Catholics were allowed to go to the University and mingle with the Protestant students. ["Hear, hear!"] He was afraid hon. Members would say that he had been speaking to two sides of this question, but he had been trying to put the matter as candidly as he could. [*Cheers.*] He hoped the Government, at all events, in setting up this University would first make certain that their offer would be accepted. ["Hear, hear!"] Their experience in this way had not been very happy. The Queen's colleges were set up and immediately denounced as godless colleges. In 1868 there was the scheme which Mr. Disraeli brought forward, supported by Cardinal Manning in England, but thrown over by the Catholic Bishops. In 1873 Mr. Gladstone's scheme was thrown over by the Catholic Bishops. In 1879 the Conservative Party took up the question with somewhat more success. They established the Royal University in hopes of satisfying the Catholic demand, but as far as he could see there was scarcely any difference either since the opening of Trinity College to Catholics, or since the establishment of the Royal University in the course pursued by the Catholics. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought two points should be made clear before there was any legislation on the subject. One was what proportion of lay influence there was to be on the governing body? He need scarcely say that with the disciplined action that characterised the hierarchy in Ireland if the Bishops formed a majority, or if they even formed an exact half of the body, they might just as well have a monopoly. Another point hardly less important was the position of the professors. Of course, they would be chosen not merely on the ground of competence, but also to a great extent on the ground of creed. This was inevitable, and therefore he did not wish to object to it, but he trusted that, having been chosen, something would be done to give them security of position, and not leave them, like the unfortunate National schoolmaster, liable to be dismissed at the instance of some ecclesiastical authority. ["Hear, hear!"] He would conclude, as he began, by saying he thought the time had come for some change in the University system of Ireland, and that as long as they in Trinity College were left unmolested to do their own work, were allowed to keep their own unsectarian basis, and were not obliged to refuse anybody on account of religion, they would certainly not play the part of the dog in the manger or be hostile to anything that might be set up for the benefit of the Catholics of Ireland. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.), who was received with cheers: I do not know whether, after the most interesting and instructive speech of my hon. Friend, the House will think it time for some statement to be made from the Government Bench. I, Sir, have unwittingly already, I may say, taken up a good deal of the time of the House this evening and last night in my views on this question, for all certain speeches I have made in this House and out of it appear to have been divided up among Gentlemen opposite, and column after column has been poured out upon a patient House, and after so full an exposition of views which I once held and still hold—["Hear, hear!"]—it may seem almost superfluous that I should address the House in my own person and not entirely trust to the repetition of previous utterances which hon. Gentlemen have so largely favoured us with. But I imagine what the House really wants to know is the view the Government take at the present moment upon this question. I may express, in the first place, my general agreement—I will not say with everything, but with almost everything that fell from my hon. Friend who has just preceded me. Amongst other things, I entirely agree with him in the delicate censure which he passed upon the violence of the language used on the other side in pressing the Irish claims. After all, let it be remembered that in France, in which the proportion of the Roman Catholic to the Protestant population is far greater than in Ireland, the position of higher University education in reference to Roman Catholic teaching is, as far as I understand, not nearly so favourable as it is even now in the case of Ireland. There is, as has already been stated, a method by which a State subvention of Imperial money does go towards the endowment of professors in a distinctively Roman Catholic University. No such privilege exists in France, and it will hardly be maintained that that which is tolerated by the great majority of French Roman Catholics is in itself deserving of all the vehement invective levelled against the Irish system by hon. Gentlemen to-day. [*Cheers.*]

MR. HARRINGTON hoped the right hon. Gentleman did not think he levelled any invective against the Irish system. He certainly did not do so.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I apologise to the hon Gentleman. I had not his speech in my mind when this observation dropped from me. The hon. Member for Donegal indulged last night in a vehemence of rhetoric to which the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down was a stranger, and it was his eloquence I was thinking of, and not that of the hon. Gentleman. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] While I desire entirely to dissent from the attack made upon the existing system in Ireland by hon. Gentlemen opposite, I must also frankly dissociate myself from the views put forward last night by my hon. Friend one of the Members for Belfast. ["Hear, hear!"] I confess myself really quite unable to understand the attitude of a man who views with perfect serenity a system of primary education in which the manager of the elementary school is a priest, in which the teacher of the elementary school is a Roman Catholic, liable at any moment to be dismissed by the priest, and in which religious emblems specially characteristic of Roman Catholic teaching are exhibited during some hours of the day—I cannot understand the frame of mind which can regard that system with perfect equanimity as in no sense inimical to the Protestant faith, and yet regard with horror the establishment of University education—education that is, which is directed to minds of students at a time when they are far more capable of reacting against the teaching which they listen to than they are at the tender age when they are subjected to primary education. ["Hear, hear!"] It appears to me that nobody who can contemplate the existing system of education in Ireland can object to the establishment of higher education of a kind more acceptable to the Roman Catholic people on grounds of principle. We have gone so far in our primary education, we have even gone so far in what we have already done in regard to University education, that, if principle there be which says that the State abstains, as from an unclean thing, from spending a single sixpence of public money on any system of education in which Roman Catholic teaching is at all concerned, that is so absolutely abandoned that I confess I should think that my hon. Frend and those who think with him would do well to reconsider the uncompromising position which they have consistently taken up upon this matter. ["Hear, hear!"] But whilst I hold that view, as I have always held very strongly, I do not deny anything which my hon. Friend who has just sat down has stated with regard to the evils of segregating one denomination from another in different denominational establishments. Everything my hon. Friend said about those evils has a real existence in fact. But let the House remember that, so far as experience teaches us anything, it teaches us this—that the question is not between having Universities in which Protestant and Roman Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian are joined together in a common system of education, between that system and a system in which each member of a denomination is taught separately in his own establishment. The choice is not between these two things. If we could find a system which carried out the idea of my hon. Friend, then I for one should abandon every word I have said in regard to the establishment of a Roman Catholic College or University in Ireland. If I could see rise up in Ireland an institution such as Trinity College aspires to be, as my hon. Friend has told us, and which is only prevented from being so by what I cannot help regarding, and what I hope I may call without offence, the prejudices of the Roman Catholic population in Ireland—if I could see that, then I should regard the question as having been solved most profitably for the furtherance of all educational requirements in Ireland. But I am afraid that everybody that knows Ireland, whatever his opinions may be and whatever party of politics he belongs to, is reluctantly compelled to admit that any such prospect is incapable of realisation. ["Hear, hear!"] We have to accept the fact that, unless we are able to contrive some system of higher education in which the Roman Catholic population will consent to take part, it is vain for us to hope that higher education will be practically brought within the reach of a large number of the members of that community which certainly ought to take advantage of it. ["Hear, hear!"] But in stating this view I hope I shall not be considered as in any way minimising the statements I have made before if I say we ought to be convinced, before any new plan is carried into effect, that it really will give what we want—a good system of higher education. [*Cheers.*] I used to hold the view, and have expressed it with great confidence, that the higher education should not be given in a Roman Catholic University, but in a Roman Catholic College, the distinction being that while the Roman Catholic University could give degrees the Roman Catholic College could not, and that there might be a prospect of the students of the Roman Catholic College meeting the students of the other Protestant colleges in equal competition, and that the general standard of education would thereby be kept up. In that argument I still see very great force, but I admit that since I made the speeches to which such lavish reference has been made in the course of this Debate I am more impressed than I used to be with the disadvantages from the purely educational point of view of dividing the examining authority from the teaching authority. ["Hear, hear!"] The system prevalent at this moment in London University and in the Royal University of Ireland undoubtedly has some merits, but I think that almost all those who are interested in higher education will agree with me when I say that the general experience of mankind is that, if you want to get the best results, you cannot and ought not to depend on examinations alone, but that you ought to associate the teaching body with the examining body, and that the same influences which prevail with the examining should prevail also with the teaching. ["Hear, hear!"] That is an argument against a Roman Catholic College and in favour of a Roman Catholic University, but it leaves us open to the danger which I hope to avoid by having a college rather than a University—that the University, if or when it were set up, would not maintain at a high level the secular education which is the sole object we have in view in promoting higher education in Ireland at all. ["Hear, hear!"] I confess I should like to have some information as to what the views prevalent in Ireland are with regard to the governing body of the institution which it is desired to set up. I wish I were more intimately acquainted than I am with the efforts which have been made in different parts of the world to deal with the special problem now before us. I understand, for example, that in the United States of America there has been a purely Roman Catholic college instituted under ecclesiastical management. I do not know how far it has yet been a success, or whether, indeed, there has been time to show whether it is likely to be a success or not. It appears, so far as I can discover with such information as is at our disposal, that at present, at all events, judging from the statistics of the courses which the students attend, it is principally for the purpose of educating theological students. That, of course, is not the object we have in view in setting up a new higher educational machinery in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] Then I notice that in France, as I have already said, the State jealously, and even brutally, appears to desire to exclude anything in the nature of ecclesiastical influence in the higher education of the country. That may be due perhaps to those rather sharp political divisions which in France have divided the Republican Party, or sections of the Republican Party I should say, from the Roman Catholic hierarchy. But if we go to Germany, I am informed that in Bavaria and Austria, countries in which the general prevalence of Roman Catholicism will not be disputed by anybody, the Universities, which are admirable institutions, are kept entirely free, so far as I know, from anything in the nature of clerical control. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bavarian Universities are in many respects necessarily different from anything we have, or perhaps should desire to have or could have, in this country. But the German Universities have done a work the importance of which to Germany and the world it is impossible to exaggerate—["hear, hear!"]—and I think that, even while it would be absurd to attempt slavishly to imitate their constitutions, there may be lessons to be learned from those constitutions which all persons interested in higher education would do well to take to heart. ["Hear, hear!"] All I want to do in this very brief and very imperfect survey of our existing means of information is to show that here is the real crux in the problem. This House cannot be asked, and should not be asked, to set up an institution which when set up will not fulfil the object we have in view. If the machinery is such that we cannot as reasonable men hope to get from it the very best fruits of the higher learning, then we had better not touch the subject at all. ["Hear, hear!"] We have therefore to meet a double condition. We have got so to contrive a University that it shall meet with the general approval of, or be largely used by—let me put it that way—those classes of the Roman Catholic population who now refuse to take advantage of the existing institution. That is our first object. Our second object must be that, when they carry into effect their willingness to attend the lectures and to gain all the advantages of this new educational institution, the institution itself should be one worthy of the efforts of this House, worthy of the great cause in which it is to be set up, and should be of a character which, if it does not speedily rival Trinity College in its immense services to the civilisation of the United Kingdom and of the world, shall at all events in the course of generations rival that great institution. I confess that upon this perplexing problem we have not had so much guidance from the leaders of Irish public opinion as we should like to have. My hon. Friend has given the House a piece of advice which I think should be laid to heart, and the common-sense of which it is probable everybody will recognise. He said—

> "Don't let us propose a scheme until we are tolerably sure that it will be acceptable."

I have indicated the difficulties which must attend the framers of any scheme on the subject. I hope everybody, on whatever side of the House he sits, will recognise that I have approached this question in a spirit which is not hostile—[*Irish cheers*]—even to the most specially Irish view of the subject. I was amused on looking at a speech delivered many years ago by the present Leader of the Opposition on Mr. Gladstone's University Bill of 1873. The then Mr. Vernon Harcourt observed that—

> "For himself, not being a Home Ruler"—[*loud laughter*], "he had never adopted the idea of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas."

[*Renewed laughter.*] I am not a Home Ruler, but I do not draw from that the doctrine and the corollary drawn from it by the then Mr. Vernon Harcourt. Though not a Home Ruler, I am sincerely anxious that in this matter we should put all sectarian prejudices aside—[*cheers*]—and attempt to meet the wishes of Ireland in this respect, and I am certain that those who sit on the other side of the House, and who are most opposed to me in general politics, will agree with me, at all events in this, that we should be doing Ireland no service whatever if in our attempt to give them a form of higher education acceptable to the majority of the people we were to set up either a college or a University which would not compare on equal terms with other educational institutions on both sides of St. George's Channel. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I am sure no fault can or will be found with the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has approached this, as he says quite truly, very difficult problem. He has approached it in exactly the spirit which I expected from him in view of the various utterances quoted, as he says, so lavishly in this Debate, and more especially in accordance with the view which he laid before the House four years ago upon an occasion of which I will take the liberty of reminding him and other Members. It is useful to remember it, because on that occasion, contrary to the expectation of the Government of that day, in both Irish quarters of the House—the senior Member for the University of Dublin and Mr. Sexton, who was then, but who is, I am sorry to say, no longer, a Member of this House—we hit upon an agreement as to which both these hon. Gentlemen assented. That was on the occasion of the Irish Government Bill of 1893 being discussed in this House, and the question then raised was whether an Irish Parliament should be or should not be allowed to establish and endow a place for higher or University education. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University moved an Amendment to the effect that the Irish Parliament should be prohibited from establishing or endowing any body of that kind. Upon that occasion that right hon. Gentleman said that he still held the view he had always entertained, and was in favour of allowing the Imperial Parliament to do this, although he was against its being done by an Irish Parliament. I then, on behalf of the Government, while desiring to assent to the Amendment in that form, proposed an Amendment of our own, which was eventually, after a certain amount of discussion, assented to by both Parties, and was passed without a division. We did not propose that course without great misgiving. The question was a burning one, and we apprehended that, with the narrow majority which we then enjoyed, we might have great difficulty in carrying it. What was the proposal we made which, as I have said, commanded universal assent? It was that the Irish Parliament should be allowed to establish a place of Catholic University education with two provisoes—first, that they should not endow out of public funds any theological chair; and, secondly, that such an endowment should be subject to all the restrictions which the Act of 1873 imposed upon the University of Dublin. To that proposal the right hon. Gentleman assented. He said that it was a wise and genuine way of meeting a real difficulty, and he also said that, if the Home Rule Bill had no other result, it would not be fruitless if that agreement were carried into effect. Mr. Sexton also regarded the agreement as of very great value, and as being a step in the right direction. That is the history of the proposal. I have heard with the greatest satisfaction the statement which the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has made to-night. No man in the House would give more than I would to avoid setting up any teaching University in Ireland in which ecclesiastical teaching should be a prominent feature, and I wish it had been in our power to avoid this necessity. I believe that, without that course being adopted, a natural emulation would arise amongst the teachers and students of the Catholic college and Trinity College—a rivalry which might not be to the disadvantage of either. I do not know what view of the matter may be taken by high ecclesiastical personages in Ireland, but I may say, without any breach of confidence, that I had an opportunity of consulting some of them on this point when the Home Rule Bill was before the House, and I understood that they would assent—of course, through an Irish Parliament—to the proposal that no Divinity chair in a Catholic university or college should be endowed out of public funds. Of course, those high ecclesiastical personages may have since seen occasion to change their views on the subject. [" No, no," *from the Nationalist Members.*] That I regard as an important admission. [" Hear, hear !"] The right hon. Gentleman opposite rather minimised the denominational character of Trinity College, but he cannot deny that it is one of the most important institutions in Ireland for the training of ministers for the Protestant Episcopal Church, and I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not exclude from the Catholic University the theological faculty, provided that the chairs are not endowed out of public funds. [" Hear, hear !"] However, I need not now go into further details. Speaking for myself, I have heard the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with great agreement, and I hope that we shall not go much longer without something being carried out in the direction on which we are both agreed. [" Hear, hear !"]

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) shared the hope that appeared to be entertained on all sides of the House that something effectual might at length be done in regard to the subject. One argument used by the hon. Member for Trinity College rather told his own position; he pointed to the fact that the overwhelming proportion of the Irish Catholics who had played a prominent part in the history of their country had been students at Trinity College. That was roughly true, but did it not tend to show how great was the grievance? As a matter of fact a small proportion only of the Catholics of Ireland had been members of Trinity College, but it was found that of that small proportion a very large number had risen to distinction, not merely in Ireland but in other countries. Was it not reasonable to suppose, therefore, that if similar educational advantages had been open to a larger body they would have made simlar use of it, and there would have been a much greater number of distinguished Irish Catholics than there had been. The House had reason to be grateful to the hon. Member for the tone of his speech. That speech was free from sectarian bitterness, and in that respect he was sure it would be approved by the vast majority of educated Irish Protestants. For the most part educated Protestants in Ireland had been free from religious bigotry. It was no small thing for Irish Protestants to point back that it was an Irish Protestant Parliament which, first amongst the Protestant Legislative bodies of the world, established a separate State-endowed college for the education of Catholic priests? The work which was done more than 100 years ago under the influence of Edmund Burke in establishing Maynooth, showed that amongst the educated body of Irish Protestants there was no inherent sectarian bitterness which would prevent them giving adequate educational facilities to their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. He sometimes heard that the Presbyterians were opposed to any further facilities being given to Roman Catholics for university education, and it was therefore a pleasure to him to read yesterday the speech of the head of the Presbyterian College at Belfast, in which it was declared that this question urgently demanded treatment and that its solution was a task worthy of any Statesman. There were one or two other points he would like to refer to. For instance, he thought the case of the Queen's colleges was not sufficiently stated. When it was said those institutions were unsectarian it would be generally supposed that the Queen's colleges were very much like the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. But the rules which had been applied to the Queen's colleges were much stronger than most Members of the House no doubt imagined. Every Queen's College professor was prohibited from giving any instruction to his class except what was strictly undenominational, and every professor before entering upon his duties must append his signature to the following declaration:—

> "I further promise and enagage that in lecturing and examining, and in the preformance of all other duties connected with my class, I will carefully abstain from teaching or advancing any doctrine or making any statement derogatory to the truths of revealed religion, or injurious or disrespectful to the religious convictions of any portion of my class or audience."

He had the honour of the acquaintance of Professor Young, the Professor of English History in the Queen's College, Belfast, and that Gentleman had explained to him the great difficulty in which he was placed when lecturing on the period of the Reformation, because he found it quite impossible to give any effective instruction to students on that subject without saying things which were disrespectful to the religious convictions of some of them. So that in the rules imposed on the Queen's colleges in the vain hope that the Catholics might come to them, they had done an injury not merely to the Catholics but to the Protestants of Ireland. For the sake of the Queen's colleges themselves it would be well, he thought, if that part of their strict rules was somewhat modified. The effect of such rules as he had mentioned was seen in the state of the Galway Queen's College, and he thought that upon that institution there was a ridiculous waste of public money. According to the last Report the income of that college was £9,000 a year, and the students numbered 105. Only 48 of the students were Catholic—48 in the overwhelmingly Catholic province of Connaught. And the majority of the students were not Connaught men at all; they came from Munster, Leinster, and, in the greater part, from Ulster—43 of the 105 came from Ulster. The fact was there were a large number of Scholarships that were easy to get, and consequently the Ulster Presbyterians who could not win the Scholarships in the Queen's College, Belfast, went to Galway to win them. To spend the large amount now spent at Galway was nothing else than waste, and the sooner the money was applied to the real work of education in Ireland the better. The First Lord of the Treasury referred to the question whether in the interest of education it was better the Catholic college should be part of the University of Dublin, which would also include Trinity College, or whether, on the other hand, there should be a separate Catholic university.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY never contemplated including Trinity College in the University.

MR. KNOX was sorry if he misunderstood the right. hon. Gentleman. If the right hon. Gentleman did not contemplate the union of the new Catholic college with the University of Dublin he was driven at once to the other alternative, a separate Catholic university. He thought that in dealing with this problem the separate circumstances of Ulster should for educational reasons be taken into account. He believed that it would be possible to set up in Belfast with advantage a separate Catholic college forming part of the University of Belfast. He was told that in the University of Sydney, New South Wales, there were three colleges, one Catholic, one Presbyterian, and one Episcopolian, and that the University was worked effectually and with little religious difficulty. The example of Sydney might be followed in Belfast with useful effect. He trusted that some steps would be taken to give a practical result to the Debate. It had been well said on both sides of the House that no satisfactory solution of the question could be arrived at without arranging a plan in concert with the representatives of the Irish Catholics. Having admitted the grievance he hoped the Government would go further and admit that it was part of their duty to set about ascertaining whether they could not, in concert with the representatives of the Irish Catholics, devise a plan which would meet with the approbation of Parliament. There was just one other aspect of the question to which he would like to refer in conclusion. It had reference to a grievance which was being aggravated day by day. The Indian Civil Service used to be open to boys of eighteen at the close of their school education. Formerly a very large number of Irish Catholics entered the Indian Civil Service, and some of them had risen to the highest posts. The men upon whom, as Lieutenant Governor of the North West Provinces, the chief duty of battling with the famine today rested, was one of those Irish Catholics, Sir Antony MacDonnell. Most of these young men proved themselves to be efficient servants. But four or five years ago a change was made by the Civil Service Commissioners in the regulations for entering the Indian Civil Service. The age was changed from 18 to 23, and candidates, instead of going up for examination at the close of their school career as boys, were henceforth to go up as young men at the close of a university career. The result of that change was that Catholics were now almost entirely excluded from the service. That fact alone showed that the question was a pressing one, and as they had now arrived at something like an agreement on the main principles of the question it was the duty of the Government to give effect to those principles. The First Lord of the Treasury had shown that he understood the position of the Catholics of Ireland in this matter, and that he, to some extent, sympathised with them in the disadvantages they suffered through the want of adequate university education; and that being so, surely he ought to set about the task of proposing a scheme which Parliament could accept. He thought they ought to receive some sort of promise from the Treasury Bench that steps would be taken by the Government to frame such a measure, acting in concert with the Catholic Bishops of Ireland, as would satisfy the minds and consciences of the Irish people. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that after the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, the question must become much more largely one of terms, and he thought the hon. Member for Kildare would be well advised not to press the Amendment to a division, because the object he had in view had been practically met by the right hon. Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] The First Lord in this question had certainly been consistent, and he would ask the hon. Member for South Belfast to remember that the first thing the present Viceroy did when he arrived in Ireland was to pledge the Government to the establishment of a Catholic university for Ireland. Twice after that the Viceroy was invited to Belfast, and he was received with distinction by the citizens, showing that there was not the strong feeling against the establishment of such a university as the hon. Member suggested. ["Hear, hear!"] The First Lord of the Treasury in his able speech laid down the conditions to which he thought the Irish Members should respond, but abstained from saying anything as to what the Government would do if those conditions were not accepted. It had been admitted—apart from all conditions—that there was a real grievance to be dealt with, and that being so, it was the duty of the Government to deal with it. The right hon. Gentleman adopted a suggestion thrown out by the eloquent Member for Trinity College, to the effect that the Government should not propose any scheme until they were certain that it would be accepted. But how could it possibly be known that a scheme would be accepted until it was proposed? The Irish Members, or Catholics, could not declare in advance their acceptance of a scheme which they had not seen. It would be fairer to ask them to indicate the conditions of a scheme they would accept. The right hon. Gentleman asked for guidance on one point. He said that he should like to have some information and guidance as to the governing body of the proposed university. Now, in everything the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the objects the Government should have in view in the formation of a Catholic university he entirely concurred. Neither the Catholic Bishops nor the Catholic people generally desired to set up anything in the nature of a mere ecclesiastical seminary. What they desired was a university of liberal culture, of liberal training. They had no desire to impose anything like a narrow institution on the country. ["Hear, hear!"] They made no such demand. Those who read the recent declaration of the Irish Bishops would perceive that the Catholic hierarchy did not even claim a dominating position on the governing body of such a university; and, indeed, the general desire of the Catholics of Ireland would be that the lay element should dominate the governing body. But the Catholic Bishops and clergy of Ireland felt very strongly on this matter in the interests of the people. They had long seen that the Catholics of Ireland had been shut out of positions of emolument and positions of liberal attainments, because there was no institution to which they could resort in their youth by reason of the Protestant atmosphere that prevailed in the existing colleges. He would ask the hon. Member for South Belfast whether he would like to send his children to a Jesuits' school—to place them under the care of the Jesuits? Then, why should he be forced to send his children to a Protestant school, and to place them under the care of Protestant clergymen? ["Hear, hear!"] The existing condition of things in Ireland with regard to this question of Catholic university education was not only very unjust, but was absurd in a country like Ireland. Therefore what the Catholic Bishops and people desired and demanded was the establishment of an institution of liberal learning, in which a Catholic atmosphere should prevail. ["Hear, hear!"] To say that they could have this—that they could secure the object they had in view in connection with Trinity College—was little less than an absurdity. He would give an illustration about Trinity College. There fell vacant recently a Gaelic Chair in the college. Now, the ablest professor of Irish, either in Ireland or elsewhere, was a well-known Protestant gentleman—Dr. Douglas Hyde. What did the college do? They gave the position to a gentleman who, he admitted, was also a man of high attainments, and against whom he had not a word to say, but who was a Protestant clergyman. They passed over the layman, and elected the clergyman, because they wished to continue the old policy of Protestant teaching. Under existing circumstances he could not blame the college—

MR. EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said the appointment was not made by the college, but under a private deed, providing certain persons to make it.

MR. T. M. HEALY did not see that that touched the question, and even if it did it strengthened his case. Even under a private deed it was not obligatory to appoint a parson; that was his point.

MR. CARSON said that personally he supported the other candidate.

MR. T. M. HEALY said that that still further strengthened his case. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] But he had only used the illustration for the purpose of showing that Trinity College was immersed in what he called doctrinal and militant Protestantism. ["Hear, hear!"] Whatever endowment was conferred on a Catholic university, no matter how distinguished the gentlemen appointed to manage it might be, it must be many years before it acquired anything like the prestige of Trinity College. The position he took up was this. The Government had now admitted the principle of a Catholic university; but were they, while inquiries were being made, to be delayed for years and years? The right hon. Gentleman had made eloquent and able speeches on this question in former years, when he was not, perhaps, in a position of the same responsibility, and he recognised in the tone of the speech he had made that night a tone of graver responsibility; but he presumed he would not have made that speech unless he had intended that immediate action would be taken in the event of satisfaction being given on the point of the governing body. The right hon. Gentleman had demanded to be satisfied that in the matter of secular learning this institution should be worthy of the intentions of the Government. The Catholic had hardly yet emerged from the restrictions of the penal laws; and could they hope in the course of two or three generations, to rival or distance the Protestants? It was as absurd as to suppose that when the restrictions on the commerce of Ireland were removed, Ireland could compete with Lancashire or Yorkshire. But take the Catholics as they had been, and what was found? Wherever the Catholic had had an equal chance with the Protestant, he not only equalled him but in many instances surpassed him. The position he wished to press on the Government was this. The Bishops in Ireland in putting forward their demand were acting only as the spokesmen of the laity, and they were so acting because their position entitled them to put forward a demand peculiarly concerning men in their position. For his part, he would have no hesitation, if he were asked his opinion, in saying, either in public or in private, what he thought of this proposition or that, in his position of a Member of Parliament. He did not see why they should hold themselves aloof. The Bishops were the trustees for the Catholic laity. They had fought their battle well and long, and no man in dealing with this question could avoid saying a word of thanks to men like the Archbishop of Dublin for their long and skilful battle by voice and pen. The First Lord had not made a merely platonic suggestion that night, and for his speech he thanked the right hon. Gentleman. He was sure he would find himself able when inquiries were made, without wounding the sensitive conscience of any Protestant, to give satisfaction to the legitimate demand of the Catholics of Ireland.

MR. ENGLEDOW said he was sincerely grateful for the speech of the First Lord, and begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

CROFTERS IN SCOTLAND.

*MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) moved as an Amendment to the Address, at the end to add:—

> "And we humbly express the regret of this House that, although the Commissioners appointed by your Majesty in 1892 to inquire into the Land Question in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland have reported that nearly 2,000,000 acres of land now occupied as deer forests, grouse moors, &c., 'might be cultivated to profit, or otherwise advantageously occupied by crofters or small tenants,' there is no indication in your Majesty's Speech that arrangements will be made for acquiring some portion of this land, so that the crofters, cottars and fishermen may be able to live under more favourable conditions than those under which many of them now exist."

He said that the Highland people had no imaginary grievance. It was a real and substantial one, and had existed for a number of years. The last Government when it came into power appointed a Royal Commission to inquire whether any lands were available for the purpose set out in his Amendment. Up to that time, and indeed up to the present time, the landlords had been creating new deer forests. When a deer forest was put up for sale in London, it was usually stated in the conditions of sale that part of the forest had been in the occupation of crofters, and that consequently there was good grazing for deer. The Commission appointed in 1892 held 64 public sittings in various parts of the Highlands, and they took the evidence of landlords, crofters, cottars, fishermen, factors and the law agents of landlords. The Commission also inspected the lands in question personally. Their Report was issued in 1895, and it showed that there were 1,782,785 acres of land suitable for crofters, cottars, and fishermen. They divided that land into three classes. That suitable for new holdings they put at 794,750 acres, for the extension of existing holdings at 439,188, and that suitable for moderate-sized farms at 548,847 acres. They also distinguished between the old arable and pasture land. It was worth noting that as the arable land fell out of cultivation population diminished. In Argyleshire, for instance, 23,116 acres of old arable had gone out of cultivation, and whereas the population in 1831 was 100,973, in 1891 it had fallen to 74,998—a decrease of 25,975, or upwards of 25 per cent. during 60 years. What a record! This end was attained by evictions of a brutal and merciless character. In Inverness-shire the old arable land out of cultivation was 20,779 acres. In 1841 the population was 97,799, and in 1891, 89,847, a decrease of 7,952, and in these figures no allowance was made for the normal increase. This was a sad record for the Queen's reign. The condition of these people to-day was as bad as it could possibly be. In the Island of Lewis, with a population of 30,000, some years ago 27 townships were cleared in order to add to deer forests and large farms. The people were driven from these townships to the sea-shore and barren spots to eke out a living as best they could. These were people who had brought their land into cultivation, and had built their own houses, and yet they were ruthlessly driven from their homes. The Royal Commissioners in their Report referred to the need and the pressing importance of providing these cottars and fishermen with land, and they recommended that each should have a patch of ground for the cultivation of potatoes and grazing sufficient for one cow. The Commissioners spoke of the men as honest and hard-working, a character they well deserved. He was always pained when he heard the Highlanders of the West Coast spoken of as if they lacked the energy and industry which would enable them to thrive. Those who made such remarks knew nothing of life in the Highlands of Scotland, and the hard conditions under which the fishermen pursued their industry. Their work was at night, and if they were seen in the daytime smoking on their crofts, it should be remembered that men could not work 24 hours a day. The Commissioners spoke of them as hard-working, capable men, who would readily take up holdings and carry them on successfully. When he was last in Lewis, a few months ago, the new owner of the island happened to be there, and it was arranged that a deputation of leading men of Stornoway and the island, merchants, traders, ministers of religion, and others, should wait upon the owner with the view of getting a few holdings for fishermen's dwellings in accordance with the recommendation of the Royal Commissioners. He introduced the deputation. He had a letter from the owner yesterday refusing to give an inch of land, and as regards the congestion of crofters, he said he hoped this would be gradually relieved in course of time. That the crofters' children were being educated in English in the Board Schools, and when they grew up they would be able to migrate to the mainland or other parts of the wide world in order to gain a living. Such was the owner's answer. But the Government should do something for one of the darkest spots in the British Islands. When he was there the people were greatly dissatisfied. He begged them to be quiet and patient, for he believed that the owner would do something for them, or that the Government would take action to carry out the recommendations of the Comissioners. As the result of the policy of the past, poverty abounded to an alarming extent. As an indication of that he quoted the assessable rental of the parish of Barvas, £2,785. The total amount of rates per £ was 10s. 4d., the assessment for the poor being 8s. 2d. The population of the parish was 7,500. The corresponding statistics for the neighbouring parish of Lochs were: Assessable rental, £3,634; total amount of rates in the £, 8s. 8d., of which the amount for poor rate was 6s. 6d. Of course there was poverty, and well there might be, when for generations the people had been robbed of their inheritance, and had not enough ground upon which to cultivate potatoes for their own wants. A special meeting of the Parish Council of North Uist was recently held to consider the question of allotments. The Council applied to the proprietors in North Uist for allotments for 82 applicants, who had among them 51 horses, 103 cows, 77 younger cattle, and 525 sheep, besides other means, and they asked for some 2,000 acres of rough pasture and 140 acres arable land. The proprietors failed to give any land for such purposes. This, notwithstanding the fact that the Report of the Commissioners showed there were 1,529 acres of old arable land gone out of cultivation, and more than 8,000 acres of pasture land. To the Government he looked to find a remedy for such a grievance, to put this question of allotments on a satisfactory footing. The state of matters in the island of Lewis was most serious. He should regret extremely a recurrence of such a state of things as arose before the passing of the Crofters Act, when the Government sent gunboats to the outer islands to compel the payment of miserable rack-rents. The Crofters Act was a godsend to the people, it gave them fixity of tenure, and rents fixed by a Land Court. In many cases rents were reduced from 40 to 60 per cent., and in some instances arrears were wiped out to the extent of 90 per cent. The Highland population were a peace-loving people, and he only wished that some Members of the Government would visit the Western Highlands and Islands, as a few years ago the Secretary for the Colonies did, and see the conditions of existence there for the fishermen, crofters and cottars. It was no use merely going to Stornoway or Portree. Too often the Scotch Office derived its information from landlords and their agents. Let a Member of the Government go to the islands and realise the conditions of life of the people. In the course of debate much had been said as to the condition of the peasantry in the West of Ireland, and he sympathised with the people there. He had been in the poorest districts in the West of Ireland, and he could safely say that, horribly bad as were the conditions of life there, the conditions of life in the outer Hebrides were worse. Let English Members understand that landlords in those districts spent no money on the holdings as English landlords did, everything was provided by the tenant, who built his own house, such as it was, with turf. Every year the roof of the house was renewed, the old material being strewn on the land for manure. If the people had more land, if they had some of the 2,000,000 acres the Commissioners said were fit for cultivation, soon their condition would improve, and they would have those well-built houses which it was gratifying to see had, in some instances, resulted from the working of the Crofters Act of 1886. He might be asked what he proposed should be done for the landlords. He would reply, "Let the land be valued by a Land Court." The people were prepared to pay a fair rent, and the machinery of the Crofters' Commission could be used for the purpose which he had in view. The Commissioners were able men, who would act fairly towards the landlords, and they knew the nature of the land. He could not understand why the Highlands received so little attention from the Government. Was it because the Highlands had so few representatives? If there were a solid phalanx of Highland representatives he could not help thinking that more would be done for that part of the country. The Government had set aside some £15,000 for the benefit of the congested districts. For that he was grateful, although the sum was so trifling that only a small experiment could be made with it. How was this money going to be spent? Were the Government going to aid the fishermen or were they going to make roads and harbours, or were they going to provide for a better system of education so as to enable the rising generation to go into the world with a better mental equipment than they could obtain now? What, however, the people chiefly needed was land. In 1895 the late Secretary for Scotland brought in a Bill containing proposals for utilising some 500,000 acres out of the 2,000,000 to which his Amendment referred. The present First Lord of the Treasury, who was then Leader of the Opposition, opposed the project, saying that the Bill was not a generous one, and did not make provision for the poorer crofters and cottars. In fact the right hon. Gentleman then showed the most ardent affection for the Highland crofters and fishermen, but now that he had crossed the floor of the House his sentiments appeared to have undergone a change. He looked upon the question to which he called attention not only as a Highland but as a National question. In recent years unusually large sums had been voted for naval and military purposes, and it was well known that many of our best soldiers and sailors had come from the Western Highlands. Some years ago as many as 10,000 soldiers came from Skye. But now recruiting in the Highlands was not as successful as it used to be. The children of men who fought the battles of this country in days gone by felt that successive Governments had not treated the people fairly, and resenting this they refused to join the army. Special efforts were made when the late Secretary for War was in office to obtain recruits in the Highlands, but the success of those efforts was so small that it was calculated that each recruit cost the country something like £100. If the people were but fairly treated they would, he felt sure, readily join the services. The Highlands were rapidly becoming places for breeding and rearing deer and sheep. Surely the production of a hardy and contented race of men was more important. If things went on as they were now, the Highlands would become depopulated, and there would be no more Highlanders, men of splendid physique and fine fighting qualities, to replenish the ranks of the army and navy. He appealed to the Government to take some action in the matter, and to make a start. Let them give the people access to the land. This was a year of rejoicing, being the jubilee of the Queen's reign. Her Majesty had always shown the greatest affection and regard for the Highland people. Let the Government then this year gladden the heart of Her Majesty by doing something to improve the conditions of the Highlander's life. The sons and descendants of the men who had fought at Waterloo, Inkerman, Alma, and in many other battles, were assuredly entitled to some consideration and sympathy. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

On the return of Mr. Speaker after the usual interval,

MR. JAMES CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid), in seconding the Amendment, said that he had always taken a great interest in the crofter question, and had endeavoured to keep it out of Party politics, as all questions of distress among the people should be kept. When the Liberal Government were in office he had supported an Amendment similar to the present one. Both Parties had admitted the existence of distress in the Highlands, but they differed as to the means of relieving it. The Liberal Government passed the Crofters Act to secure fair rent and fixity of tenure, and gave grants from the Imperial exchequer for encouraging the fisheries and making roads. But the Unionist Government had, of course, been afraid of any legislation which would alter the Land Laws, and they had spent Imperial money in improving communications. At one time, too, they made a grant to encourage emigration, but that policy had not been persisted in, because it had failed. Out of the money allocated to Scotland under the Local Government Act, they had set aside £10,000 a year to be devoted preferentially to the Highlands, and in the Agricultural Rating Bill another £15,000 a year was devoted to the Highland congested districts. One might object to that policy as throwing the burden on the kingdom of Scotland instead of on the United Kingdom. The grants for the Irish congested districts were made out of Imperial funds; but he would not press that point. When, however, the people of Scotland were paying £25,000 of their own money for the Highlands, there was the better case for asking the Government to do something which the Government alone could do. Everything that could be said about agricultural distress in England or Ireland, applied with equal force to the Highlands; and there were in the Highlands special aggravations of the distress which did not exist elsewhere. The soil and the climate were much worse than in the Irish congested districts; the yield per acre was smaller in every kind of crop, and the crofters had no means of obtaining manure. But the real deficiency was in the size of the holdings. In the crofting counties the average holding was only about £4 a year; and it was impossible for a man to keep himself and his family on the produce of such a holding. Though there were 2,000,000 acres suitable for cultivation, it was impossible for the crofter by any means to increase his holding. Therefore he had to combine crofting with fishing, or go somewhere else to work for a period of the year. Both expedients were bad for the man's cultivation of his holding. What the Government were asked to do in this case was simply what they did for a railway company, or a public body desiring to acquire land. Let the Highlands be treated as an exceptional case, and the taking of land be authorised for the purpose of increasing the size of the holdings. It was often said that this was a question of rent. It was nothing of the kind. Supposing the crofters who paid £4 or £10 a year rent for their holdings got those holdings for nothing, how could they support themselves and bring up their families in the circumstances in which they found themselves, being cornered on every hand? The crofter cannot get an inch of ground beyond his own holding, and if even he got the benefit of the Crofters Act and had a fair rent fixed, or even if he got the holding for nothing, what earthly use would it be to him? The landlords' policy in the Highlands was a policy which had existed some years ago in the other parts of Scotland also. The landlords generally had got the feeling that if a population were brought about their places by trade and by manufactures the poor rates would go up. There was no doubt that the poor rates were high in the Highlands, but when the people were kept in poverty and prevented from earning a living it could not well be otherwise. Even if the policy of the landlords which he had indicated kept down the rates, it was most detrimental to the public interest, because the industrial centres of Scotland would badly feel the want of a population reared in the Highlands upon which to draw for workers. The best workers in Glasgow were men and women who had been born and brought up in the Highlands. About three-fourths of the policemen of Glasgow had been reared in the Highlands, and were selected for the force because of their fine physique, and it was well known that there was no better recruiting ground for the Navy and the Army than the crofting districts of Scotland. It was, therefore, obvious that in the interest of the country as a whole, apart altogether from the question of humanity, it would be a good thing to develop the population of the Highlands of Scotland by enabling the crofters to live, and not to starve as they were doing at present, upon the land. There was no difficulty whatever in carrying out the policy recommended in the Amendment. There was no difficulty whatever in finding land in order to increase the crofters' holdings. The landed proprietors who would be affected by the policy of the Amendment had millions of acres, and their interests would not be interfered with in any way, for the land that would be required for the crofters would be to them a mere bagatelle. Then the effect would be to benefit even the landlords themselves. In the first place, if any land was taken from them for the purpose of increasing crofts they would be compensated by getting the full value of the land. The rates would get less because the land would increase in value; railways would pass through the districts, and they would be followed by tourist traffic, and therefore, a great service would be done to the landlords themselves from a pecuniary point of view. For all these reasons he had great pleasure, though not representing a crofters' constituency, in seconding the Amendment.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeen, W.) said he did not think any apology need be made by his hon. Friend the Member for Ross and Cromartie for having brought this question before the House. Scottish business was usually neglected, and it seemed likely that fewer facilities would be given this year than hitherto for the discussion of questions affecting Scotland; and, therefore, his hon. Friend was fully justified in having availed himself of the Debate on the Address in order to lay the sore grievances of the crofters before the House. He himself did not belong to a crofting district, but in Aberdeenshire they had a large population who were living under the same conditions as the crofter population of the Highlands, and, as he had often urged in the House, were fully entitled to enjoy the great benefits of the Crofters Act. Therefore, from the point of view of his own constituency, he thought it was his duty to support the Amendment. He remembered well that during the Debates on the Crofters Act many prognostications of evil were indulged in. But all these prophecies were falsified, and he believed that the prophecies that were now being made by the opponents of the Amendment would meet with the same refutation in time to come. Everyone acquainted with the writings of Sheriff Brand knew the great benefits that had followed to the crofters from the Crofters Act. Even in his evidence before the Welsh Land Commission Sheriff Brand pointed out that the Act had made a remarkable change for the better in the crofters of the Highlands. They were more industrious, more independent, and greatly improved in every way. The House had admirably carried out all the recommendations of the Crofters' Commission except one, namely: that the crofters should have in addition a fixity of tenure and a fair rent, and the right to have their crofts extended in order that they might have scope for the energies they undoubtedly possessed. The Commission pointed out that the only way to do that was to enlarge the holdings. The crofters were often accused of laziness by people who knew nothing about them. Men could not well be otherwise but lazy if they were deprived of the opportunities for industry. If they put men down in a certain district and did not give them land to cultivate, and refused them harbours by which they might develop the trade of fishing, they could not be blamed if they walked about with their hands in their pockets, simply because they could not find any industrial occupation. But, as he had said, the crofters—thanks to the Crofters Act—were already different men. They worked more industriously, they built their own houses out of their own pockets, and, if they got the opportunity of extending their crofts, there was no doubt that they would become as industrious and hard-working as any other section of the agricultural classes of Scotland. If the Crofters' Commission had done nothing more than to show beyond all doubt that there was plenty of land that could be worked beneficially by the crofters, it would have done a great service, for one objection formerly to the policy recommended in the Amendment was that the necessary land could not be obtained. The Commission had pointed out that there was a large quantity of land in all those districts that might be acquired without hardship to anyone to enlarge the crofting holdings. Some years ago he took the opportunity of visiting the Islands of Lewis and Skye, accompanied by his late respected friend, Sir George Campbell. They might talk about Ireland, but really he saw in those islands places more wretched than could be seen in any other part of the world. They had, no doubt, been since improved, but they could be still further improved, and the way to do that was by giving the crofters some of the available land which was lying idle all around them. He should say that in Lewis, although the surroundings of the people were miserable, he saw the finest race of human beings, male and female, that he ever saw anywhere, and he saw on their little holdings crops produced that would have done credit to much finer soil. He believed it might be urged that if the policy they recommended were adopted it would interfere with the sport of the landlord. He himself was a sportsman, as was the Lord Advocate also, he thought, and he should be very sorry to do anything which would interfere with sport; but he held that sport must always give way to public opinion. [" Hear, hear ! "] He did not, however, think that it would interfere with sport; on the contrary, it would secure the loyalty and co-operation of the tenants, and, inasmuch as the landlord would only part with some of his land on fair and honourable terms, it might have the effect of propping up some struggling Highland families of old descent who were now very impecunious. They ought not to allow the population to leave the country until they had exhausted all the resources of civilisation in the endeavour to keep them at home. The crofters were a very fine set of men, who would fight for us, and had done so in the past, and if their lot was ameliorated they would be a happy and united set of people, whom it would be a great advantage to us to keep at home.

*MR. JOHN McLEOD (Sutherland) said he was greatly disappointed with the reference which was made in the Queen's Speech to Scotland. It appeared to him that, after the repeated inquiries which had been held in regard to this matter of more land in the Highlands, an undoubted case had been made out. He had no doubt that the Lord Advocate would have no difficulty in going back to the period before the Royal Commission of 1883 had reported. When that Commission took evidence the cry was not so much that the rents were high and the conditions of tenure onerous, but that the people had insufficient holdings. The Liberal Government in its wisdom made provision for the giving of more land in the Crofters Bill of 1886, but unfortunately there was a considerable minority on the Government side of the House opposed to that part of the Bill, which was accordingly very considerably modified, with the result that the Act was practically of no value as a remedy. So marked was its failure in this respect, that a year after it came into operation the then Lord Advocate of a Conservative Government asked the Crofters Commission to make a Special Report on the subject. That Commission unanimously reported that the reason why no land, or very little, had been given to the crofters was that it was impossible for them to get it under the conditions laid down in the Act. The controversy as to whether there was or was not land available continued for some years, until at last they who had agitated this question succeeded in getting a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the subject. He had had the honour of serving on that Commission. So careful was the right hon. Gentleman the then Scottish Secretary (the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow) as to the composition of this Commission, that without the vote of the Chairman, who was practically in a judicial capacity, it was impossible for those of them who more particularly represented the crofter interest to succeed in scheduling any land as available for crofter purposes. That Commission, as was well known, reported that close upon 2,000,000 acres of land were available for the enlargement of holdings or for new holdings. He confessed that he had no expectation that the present Government would settle this question of more land on the lines which he would like to see adopted, but he did expect they would have introduced legislation which would have made the land available, whether in the shape of peasant proprietorship or otherwise. The more intimately he became acquainted with the condition of things in the Highlands the more surprised he was that any Government, whether Liberal or Conservative, should allow these conditions to continue for a single day. He found from the returns of the Registrar General of Scotland that in his own constituency the poverty was so great that the marriage rate was only one-fourth of what it was in the Lowland counties of Scotland. It might be urged that it was a very strong measure to endeavour to compel proprietors to give up land for the purpose of its occupation by crofters, but he did not think it was necessary now to argue that question. The historical position had been stated too often, and they had the authority of the present Prime Minister for saying that, so far as the tenure in the Highlands was concerned, it was an exceptional case, and they were entitled to special treatment. ["Hear, hear!"] Land not money was wanted in the Highlands. The Highland people did not come to the House as beggars, and he spoke as the son of a man who had been evicted. Let them have the natural facilities and opportunities which but for laws passed by that House they would have access to. That was all they asked for. From his own personal knowledge he did not believe the landlords would suffer any loss of sport. If they had access to natural opportunities, he could assure the House it would hear no more complaints from the Highlands of Scotland.

Mr. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.) supported the Amendment, which he considered embodied a just and reasonable demand. He submitted that a very complete case had been made out from the prayer of the Amendment. It was a disgrace to any Government calling itself Progressive that bodies of people possessed of great if rugged virtues should be compelled to eke out a miserable existence on a few acres of soil while round about them nature had provided almost unlimited room for industrial expansion. The most valuable article that land in Scotland or elsewhere could grow was men, women, and children. For the life of him he could not understand why Statesmen should deny that it was better for Scotland that two million acres of land in the Highlands should be devoted to the growth of sheep than the cultivation of sport. Five or six years ago he visited the Crofters' Colonies in Manitoba, and he was glad to say he found some of those hardy islanders doing remarkably well. They were not restricted to small crofts, for the Manitoba Government recognised the value of an industrious body of men cultivating the soil of the country. Public money was freely voted to transplant these Highlanders to the Canadian North West, and he could not help, while speaking to the crofters out there, thinking that that money would have been better expended in providing them with larger holdings in their own country. ["Hear, hear!"] He sincerely trusted the Lord Advocate would give some hope that action would be taken before long to enable these crofters to extend their holdings.

*Mr. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs) said he intervened with reluctance in the Debate because he recognised the probable futility of the whole proceeding. But if the Debate should have the effect of impressing on the Government the desirability of doing something during their tenure of office for the crofters in the Highlands of Scotland, the Mover of the Amendment would have reason to congratulate himself. Everyone who knew anything about the Highlands at all would be aware that there was a large portion of the population living on the confines of starvation. The necessity for doing something had been practically admitted by the Government, inasmuch as at the close of last Session the Lord Advocate allocated £15,000 out of the grant under the Rating Act, nominally to the relief of the congested districts in the Highlands. Had the Government made up their minds as to the destination of that sum of £15,000? If not, he would suggest that they might, as a beginning, purchase some of the 2,000,000 acres of land which the report referred to showed to be available for cultivation by crofters. What sort of men were these Highland crofters? They were hardy, they were brave, they were loyal. When Great Britain was menaced by the greatest war we ever entered into—the Peninsular War—the Isle of Skye furnished the country with 10,000 men—the flower of the British Army. Such a contingent of fighting men might be looked for now in vain in Skye or the islands of the Western Hebrides. And why? Because whole masses of the inhabitants had been evicted, their homesteads razed to the ground, and the tracts they occupied given up to sheep, deer, and grouse. More land for the crofters would not materially diminish sport. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JOHN COLVILLE (Lanark, N.E.), in supporting the Amendment, asked whether the Government should not give considerable sums of money to be allocated, in order to deal with the 2,000,000 acres of land which the Commission had reported to be suitable for cultivation, so that the Highlanders would not be compelled to leave their native lands and crowd into towns, where their influx lowered the wages. If the Scotch Members were now alive to the necessity of combination and agitation, Parliament would hear a good deal more about the state of things in the Western Highlands. The very fact that last year the Government gave £15,000 to those districts proved that they recognised the necessity for some steps to be taken, though the amount was fully ten times too little for adequately dealing with the question. He trusted the Lord Advocate would be able to give them an assurance that an honest attempt would be made to improve the necessitous condition of the crofters and fishermen in the west of Scotland. If they attempted to make a comparison between the Imperial money spent on Scotland and Ireland it would be seen that a large margin was still to the credit of Scotland, which might very well, in part, be devoted to the social alleviation of the condition of the crofters and fishermen.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) said the question of the extension of the crofter tenure to parts of Scotland described as being under crofting conditions, was not a question fairly raised by the Amendment. If the Commission which reported in 1895 made one thing clearer than another it was that the so-called case against deer forests had entirely broken down. The Commission came to the conclusion that not much was to be done in the way of making land available for cultivation which was at present occupied as deer forests. They said themselves that the land used as deer forests was, to a great extent, rocky, sterile, often remote and inaccessible, and, in configuration of surface and other circumstances, not suited for crofter holdings. He entirely agreed with the observation of the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire as to the necessity for sport giving way to public convenience, but he would remind the hon. Member that sport had two aspects. If by sport he meant the pleasures of the class he quite admitted that could not be taken into account in consideration with other interests much more serious to the community. But sport besides that had an entirely economic aspect, which must be taken into consideration and bear its full weight, even in comparison with those other interests. No one could look at the rentals in Scotland without seeing that the economic value of sport was of the greatest importance to Scotland, and accordingly he did not think they could enter into any measure which would tend to alter the conditions of sport without facing a very grave economic difficulty. As regarded the Debate generally, he thought a somewhat false assumption had underlain the discussion, more, perhaps, in tone than in anything that had been actually said. It seemed to be assumed that the problem was a perfectly easy one, and that there was nothing to do except simply to take the land that was wanted. The Amendment stated that nearly 2,000,000 acres of land were available for the extension of crofters' holdings, but, as a matter of fact, the report of the Commission stated that there were only 439,000 acres so available. The difficulty at the bottom of the whole matter was the disregard of the means by which that land could be made available with any certainty of success. It was very notable how completely some hon. Members disregarded even the terms of the report. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark, for instance, gave an account which entirely reversed not only the historical process, but also what the Commissioners said. The hon. Member said that one of the great disadvantages of the present system was that the land was so small that the crofter was driven away from his proper occupation of crofting, and had to undertake the occupation of fishing, or something of that sort. On the other hand, he thought most people would agree that the historical origin of crofting runs precisely in the other direction; that was to say, that the man had originally some other sort of occupation, and then, having a home, he eked out the resources of that home by the possession of a croft. The report of the Commission stated that the kind of a holding which, for the most part, crofters were accustomed to was one affording a home, but making it necessary that the crofter should supplement what he derived from his holding by labour, or fishing, or carrying on some trade or business in the various districts. The Commissioners also declared that the practical success of any scheme depended upon the land being cultivated by men with adequate means. He thought he had said enough to show that this was a very complex problem. The hon. Member for Mayo intervened in the Debate, and he would ask that hon. Gentleman whether he had not had experience in Ireland of the great injury a population suffered by being quartered on land which was really insufficient to support them. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment complained that people had been driven down from the hills to the sea shore.

*Mr. WEIR: Not from the hills; from the fertile land.

*The LORD ADVOCATE: He was sorry he had misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. After all it was a question of degree; but, as he was saying, Ireland afforded an illustration of how unfortunate it was for a people to be quartered on land which was insufficient to support them.

Mr. DAVITT: The evils in Ireland arose from the fact that the people were driven off the good land on to the bad.

*The LORD ADVOCATE: He only used that as an illustration to show that people might be quartered on land which would not support them. It was all a question of making such arrangements as would bring about the result that the land was properly cultivated by people possessed of adequate means. They had always admitted on his side of the House that the condition of the Highlanders left something to be desired. The Government tried to show their views on that question last year by devoting a sum of £15,000 to the improvement of that condition, and they were at this moment engaged in framing a scheme by which that money would be utilised. No doubt it had been the way of Governments in past years to embrace in the Queen's Speech every sort of question on which they might think of embarking at some time or other; but the Government had, this year, taken up the practical position of limiting the references in the Queen's Speech to what might be called the immediate possibilities of legislation. When he said they were engaged in framing a scheme he was using no mere vague phrase, but he meant that they were really considering and drafting a measure under which the sum of money he had referred to might be made available. In doing that, to a certain extent, they initiated a general scheme; but anything that was done on a small scale must be done by way of experiment before any large measure could be taken. He thanked hon. Members for their generous assurances of their belief that both the right hon. Gentleman and himself were in sympathy with the difficulties of the congested districts, and he could assure them that he was in good hope that it would not be very long before they would be able by the introduction of a Measure to show that they were in the way of putting that sympathy into a practical shape.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said he was very glad to hear that the Government intended to do something in the way of migrating some of the people in the congested districts, and settling them in other parts. He denied that the Highland crofter began as a fisherman. A couple of centuries ago he was a type of the old Aryan Village Communities, in which the people held a certain amount of land in common. Even now, in certain districts, the same condition of things would be found existing, which 500 or 600 years ago existed nearly all over Europe. In Shetland, people would be found living as they lived 200 years ago, with a certain amount of pasture land in common. At the beginning of this century, when wool was high, men were driven from being farmers to become fishermen, and to try to make a sufficient living out of that pursuit, together with the produce of a small piece of soil. He had certainly been astonished at what the Lord Advocate had said in reference to the Report of the Royal Commission. The Commission in that Report stated that there were between four and five millions of acres of uncultivated land in the country, but that it was perfectly impossible that a large portion of the mountain districts could be used for grazing or for agricultural purposes. But when they came to deal with the deer forests they found themselves able to schedule certain portions of land which were fit for either occupation or for cultivation. Of course, in certain parts the soil was of a higher and more fertile character than in the neighbouring districts. Such land, however, was better than the crofters held as a rule. In his view there were two or three million acres of land which were of such a character that they might be applied for the extension of existing and for the creation of new crofts. All that they claimed was that there were large tracts of land which were now deer forests upon which crofters might make a living. All that he maintained was that they were right in their statement that there were at least a million and a-half of acres now used as deer forests which were available for the purpose. Why was it that in the face of this fact the Poor Rate in the congested districts amounted to 8s. in the £. The Commissioners had pointed out that during the previous five years there had been something like 2,500 applications on the part of the crofters in Lewis in respect of land, the rent of which was valued at from £4,000 to £5,000 a year, and they pointed out that in some 500 cases the fair rent fixed was 20s. Let the House compare that statement with the fact that one man paid £4,000 a year as the rent of a deer forest extending over 50,000 acres. Deer forests sometimes extended over 100,000 acres. That was the reason that they had the existing state of things in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The fact was that it paid better to let the land as deer forests than in any other form. Why was there such a large amount of distress, and why were the rates so high in the county of Caithness? The Report of the Commissioners showed that in that county 56 farms, the rent of which averaged £300 per annum, were held by twelve individuals, who between them paid some £16,000 per annum rent. The result was of course that other people could not get land for agricultural purposes, and in consequence they had to flock into the congested districts. He did not know what the Government were going to do in the direction of relieving the congested districts, but he had gathered from what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland that they were not even aiding the people to make the most of the present law. Parliament had passed a Small Holdings Act for Scotland, under which power was given to Parish and District Councils to acquire land and to distribute it among the labouring classes. The crofters who held crofts of the annual value of 20s. could not get an extension of their holdings under the Crofters Act, but it was supposed that they might be able to do so under the Small Holdings Act, and the Parish and District Councils had taken steps to grant their applications. The Lord Advocate however had held that the labouring classes did not include the poorer crofters, and because the latter held small crofts they were excluded from the benefit of the Small Holdings Act, and the Parish and District Councils were prohibited from acquiring land in order to distribute it among them. He did not know why the Scotch Office Law prevented Parish and District Councils giving the crofters more land. He and his friends had been able to establish the fact that there was land, and that the misery and poverty which existed was the consequence of men being driven off the land. If the Government would do something to enable the hardy peasantry in the Highlands to live under fair and decent normal conditions they would do a great deal. And the present Government could do more than a Liberal Government, because the latter had always to fear another place. A Conservative Government could take up the question and settle it in a really final fashion.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire) said the Lord Advocate had omitted to notice the fact that the Crofter Commissioners reported that there were 794,750 acres of land suitable for new holdings.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I quoted the words of the Commissioners—"suitable for new holdings 794,750 acres."

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN understood the hon. and learned Gentleman considered that that figure was not applicable to the present Resolution. It was quite certain that land was as much wanted for new holdings as for extension of holdings. What he and his hon. Friends wanted was to prevent the expatriation of the Highland population, and it was because the sons and grandsons and nephews of the existing crofters had no new land to take up that they were obliged to emigrate to Australia, America, and New Zealand. In another respect the hon. and learned Gentleman had somewhat minimised the importance of the Resolution, for he had said the crofters would not be benefited by getting an extension of holdings, because they were suffering from having bad land and it would not do them much good to receive more bad land. The Commissioners, however, asserted that a great deal of the new land was not only as good as the land now occupied by the crofters but very much better. Again, the Lord Advocate pointed out that sheep occupied much more of the land scheduled than deer. A very natural and reasonable explanation of that was that the land occupied by sheep was much better land than that occupied by deer, and the object of the Commissioners was to provide the crofters not with bad but with good land. There was another point to which it was well to draw attention. The House might be under the impression from what had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman that the Commissioners were not unanimous in respect to the scheduling of land. There was a difference of opinion amongst the Commissioners with regard to the method by which the land was to be given to the crofters, but as to the scheduling of the land they were unanimous. He was surprised that hon. Members, especially Scotch Members, opposite had not used their great influence to induce the Government to take action in this matter. At elections hon. Members who sat on the Government benches were most zealous in advocating the claims of the crofters, but in the House of Commons they were silent. It was left to the scattered remnant of the Opposition to do the best they could for these poor people. It seemed to him an extraordinary thing to appoint an important Commission, receive the Report, and then stultify the Commissioners by taking no action. He and his Friends did not ask for charity but they asked for justice. They asked that capable and honest men should have the means of earning bread for themselves and their families.

MR. ANDREW PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said it could not be said that the speech of the Lord Advocate was unsympathetic, but it certainly was very indefinite. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of £15,000, but he did not say how that sum was to be applied or whether he intended to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. They should not forget that this Commission was appointed by a Conservative Government, and there were reasonable grounds to show at the time that it was necessary. The findings of the Commission, too, had since proved that there were very strong reasons why it should have been appointed. Without going into the details recorded by the Commission, it was sufficient to know that there were hundreds of crofters in dire distress because their holdings were not sufficiently large to enable them to earn a livelihood upon them, and that at the same time there were thousands of acres of land available in the districts to either enlarge the holdings of the crofters, or to place very many of them on new and larger holdings. No one who had not been to the Island of Lewis could fully realise the distress of the crofters there. A few years ago he went to the island to see for himself the condition in which the people lived, and his experience was a very painful one.

Since then, doubtless, some improvement had been effected through the visit and work of the Crofter Commission, but notwithstanding this the condition of the people was still very bad, and it was absolutely necessary that the Government should do something for their relief. Hon. Members on the other side had on previous occasions expressed sympathy with the efforts to improve the condition of the crofters. In 1895 when the question was before the House, the present leader of the House—who was then in a position of less responsibility—approved the object in view, and said the crofters were deserving of all sympathy and support. That being so he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to now put that sympathy in practical operation by urging the Government, of which he was a leading member, to take further action in the matter. They had the Report and recommendations of the Commission before them, embracing all the facts, and they knew that there was plenty of land with which the holdings of the crofters might be enlarged. The existing distress must continue unless greater facilities were given to the people to earn a living. The number of acres required to do this was far larger than could be dealt with by the small sum set aside last year, and he should be glad to hear whether the Bill to be introduced was to be one merely of an experimental kind, or whether it was intended by means of it to carry out any of the recommendations made in the Report of the Commission. ["Hear, hear!"]

The House divided:—Ayes, 77; Noes, 144.—(Division List—No. 4—appended.)

AYES.

Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Asquith, Rt Hn. Herbert Henry
Blake, Edward
Brigg, John
Burns, John
Causton, Richard Knight
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Collery, Bernard
Colville, John
Commins, Andrew
Crean, Eugene
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William (Dublin)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gibney, James
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harrington, Timothy
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, William
M'Donnell, Dr. M. A. (Queen's C.)
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Leod, John
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose)
Murnaghan, George
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Robson, William Snowdon
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tuite, James
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbro')
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Weir and Mr. Caldwell

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Brstl.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Begg, Ferdinand Faithful
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Brm.)
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.

Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H., Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cripps Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry.
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lnc., S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dane, Richard M.
Davenport, W. (Bromley)
Dilke Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Mnc'r.)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'y)
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Houston, R. P.
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool.)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robert Jasper
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pender, James
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon., Sir Matthew W.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wodehouse, Edmund R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

DYNAMITARDS (RELEASE).

SIR HENRY HOWORTH (Salford, S.) proposed another Amendment—at the end of the Question, to add the words :—

> "And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that, in our opinion, the explanation given by the Government to justify the release of the dynamitards is inadequate, and is calculated to encourage a recrudescence of that form of crime."

He said he thought that this Amendment had a gravity and importance which hardly attached to any other Amendment on the Paper. The interest of them all—and this was the question at issue—was the integrity of justice of which that House was the ultimate guardian. By the integrity of justice and its protection several things might be meant. It might mean protection against overt and crude attacks such as were made in ruder days, and which were no longer possible, and which were therefore no longer a danger. Or it might mean protection against more insidious attacks by which justice was made subservient to the exigencies of political strategy. A very profligate instance of this kind was the reopening of the Maamtrasna trials. [*Irish cries of* "Oh !"] But there were other reasons why this protection was needed which did not involve any moral obliquity, and which therefore perhaps had a more sinister portent. He meant the undue interference by the authorities at the Home Office with the decisions of Courts of Justice, the responsibilities of juries, and with the judgments of Judges. In this country they had secured what no other country had succeeded in securing—a masculine type of citizen to whom they could intrust the jury system of the country. They perhaps had certain racial instincts for the work, but they had certainly trained a class of men who were courageous and who were careful in their judgments, and anything that tended to lessen the sense of responsibility in these men—anything that led them to think that the hand behind the screen, not always with due responsibility, might intervene to dislocate and sophisticate the results of their careful consideration and of their work, might lead to dangers and difficulties which they could scarcely foresee. If juries begin to fancy their work may be revised presently by others, the care and courage they had hitherto shown would begin to fail, and there would be a feeling that their carelessness or want of courage in critical cases would presently be remedied by other hands. This was the particular danger to which his remarks would be chiefly directed. When his right hon. Friend in August last released from prison four persons all convicted of desperate crimes at one moment, and released them at a time when most Members of the House had left London and it was impossible to raise any issue in the House—["hear, hear!"]—there was a certain troubled feeling went over the country, and was reflected in all portions of the Press. He had means of testing this feeling in another way, for he ventured to write two or three letters to *The Times* on the subject—["hear, hear!" *and laughter*]—and he received from all parts of the Empire letters from men of consequence and influence, all of them sympathetic, all exhibiting a certain anxiety about the particular course the Home Secretary had deemed it right to follow. Before he addressed himself to the immediate question, there were two personal questions he wished to mention. His right hon. Friend would bear him out when he said that in all the years they had known each other there had never been a breath of personal difference between them. One other personal issue he would mention with another right hon. Friend, who, speaking at Manchester the other day on the course Lord Londonderry and he (Sir Henry) had deemed it right to take, said that what had been done virtually amounted to some imputation on the integrity and honour of his right hon. Friend. He could not possibly understand how such an opinion—

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: What I said at Manchester so far as I remember was that if, after the statement I then made in public, on my honour as a gentleman, anybody repeated that accusation, he would be disgraced by it, and I should not. [*Cheers.*]

SIR H. HOWORTH said he thought it would be a serious matter—a very serious matter—if, whenever any difference of opinion as to the policy or as to the prudence of a certain public action arose between himself and any of his right hon. Friends who happened to be in positions of great responsibility—if he were to be precluded from criticising that conduct or policy, because he would be charged with making some attack which, in some way, would convey an imputation of dishonour.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am most reluctant to interrupt the hon. Gentleman's remarks, but I want him to clearly understand I made no criticism on what had passed before I spoke—no criticism whatever; but after the full explanation then made undoubtedly I considered that any person who repeated that I knew there was any transaction in the matter, as the hon. Gentleman suggested, would incur, as I thought, very serious responsibility.

SIR H. HOWORTH said he had not anywhere made any imputation of any kind—he could not make an imputation—in the House or out of it affecting the honour and character of his right hon. Friend. That character, both in the

House and outside the House, was absolutely beyond suspicion. ["Hear, hear!"] He had questioned, and did still question, the prudence of the policy he adopted on a certain occasion—a policy which involved a reversal of the policy of two other right hon. Friends, both of whom had decided on different occasions in a matter closely connected with this particular issue. In no criticism he and his friends proposed to make was there the least thought or hint of causing an issue that involved anything in the shape of a sinister imputation. That was not his motive or purpose, but he did feel that if the Home Office on this and other recent occurrences had intervened with definite authority in a matter decided by a Court of Law after very serious consideration, then it was a matter which ought to be discussed on the floor of the House, and that under any circumstances the matter ought to be discussed after the subject had been matter of comment in the Press, as it was during the autumn, and that it had better be raised from those Benches than from the other side. The particular issue he purposed to raise was the dispensing power of the Home Office in cases where the Queen's mercy has hitherto been introduced to mitigate the sentence of a Court of Law in a criminal case. The intervention of the doctrine of the Queen's mercy was a very old, a patriarchal, way of mitigating hard cases of law, and so long as it was a personal act of the Sovereign—so long as it was the act of King or Queen—to soften certain acerbities of the law there was little or no ground of complaint. But directly it became a vicarious act it became much less gracious, and certain elements of danger and difficulty had become attached to it. The first of these elements of danger and difficulty was that when the exercise of the prerogative of mercy became attached to a political officer he was eventually at the mercy of a large number of outside influences, which it required a man of strong character always to resist. It was extremely indecent that in a number of cases discussed in the Press the political or private friends of prisoners should bring pressure to bear upon the Home Secretary to exercise the powers which he possessed. [Mr. DAVITT: "What about Dr. Jameson and his friends?" "Hear, hear!"] These applications placed the Home Secretary in a position of great difficulty, and his powers, unless limited by very precise rules and to a very small number of peculiar cases, would be very dangerous in the hands of a man who had not the high character of his right hon. Friend. In the particular cases to which he was referring the Home Secretary's action was open to criticism on several grounds. In the first place it was extremely unfortunate that the release of these four men should have taken place at a time when it was impossible that the subject could be discussed in Parliament. [Mr. T. M. HEALY—"No; it was long before the House rose."] The House was undoubtedly still sitting at the time, but the great mass of its Members had left London. It was on August 15 that the Home Secretary announced in the House that he had resolved to release these men, and it seemed to a great number of people in this country that their release was in curious proximity in point of time to the complacency of certain politicians, who were found to be extremely complacent when the Irish Land Bill was under discussion. [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh," *and laughter.*] All who knew his right hon. Friend knew that he was above suspicion of any kind, but it was a fact that organs of the Press, representing large bodies of opinion, commented on the coincidence to which he had drawn attention. Then he could not think that these cases were cases for exceptional kindness and consideration. The crimes for which the men had been sent to prison were crimes of exceptional gravity. They were so considered by everyone who had referred to them in that House. No one had spoken more severely about them than Mr. Gladstone, and hon. Members opposite had described them in the same strain. When these criminals came out of prison, instead of hiding in corners, ashamed of themselves and objects of shame to their neighbours, they passed from town to town in a sort of triumphal progress, acclaimed by a population demoralised in its moral standards. When men who had committed such crimes were treated exceptionally by the authorities it was an encouragement to people to view the worst of offences as glorious and praiseworthy whenever they were perpetrated from motives which the perpetrators chose to believe heroic. He held that there was exceptional treatment extended to these men. In 1895 there was an average of 4,500 prisoners in the convict gaols of the country. Out of this number there were five prisoners released in 1895 and five in 1896 on the ground of the medical recommendations of the gaol doctors. But out of the entire category of nine dynamite prisoners, four were released in one year and at one time, leaving five in prison. This was one of the elements in which there was a distinct difference made between the one class of crime and the other. If a choice had to be made it was surely to be made in the interests of men who under some momentary impulse or capricious associations had committed crime, rather than in the interests of men who had prepared and elaborated infamous designs to destroy large towns and the people who inhabited them. But that was not all. The fact that these men had friends and political allies outside had led to the appointment of one commission of doctors after another—["no, no"]—until there had been five commissions inquiring into the condition of these men. ["No, no."] There was here a distinct and very different method of treatment in the case of those criminals from that which was adopted in the case of the ordinary criminals. It was somewhat noteworthy that we had not in this country doctors who were specialists appointed to make periodical visits to all prisoners reported to them by the ordinary gaol doctors, and whose duty it should be to examine and report irrespective of any outside pressure. As to the medical condition of these prisoners, he was bound to say that he could not quite understand the theory on which his right hon. Friend based his action. Hitherto, he believed, this special intervention had been limited to those cases where a man's death was imminent; otherwise the ordinary course in all cases of long sentences was to make a quinquennial examination in regular order, and to make in those cases where good conduct could be alleged, a reduction of the sentence. The exceptional intervention of the Home Office only arose in cases of imminent death. ["No, no."] He made that statement on the high authority of Sir Edmund Du Cane.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What about the bank forgers?

SIR H. HOWORTH said that hitherto it had not been the custom to release a prisoner because he happened to have gone out of his mind. The proper place for such a prisoner was Broadmoor. ["Oh, oh."] The country had provided a special place and a special method of treatment for prisoners who lost their reason. Why, then, should two prisoners who were lunatics be turned out into society when the proper place for them was Broadmoor? But was it certain that these men were mad at all? ["Oh!"] The evidence was of the strangest character. They had had the reports of four doctors on four different occasions, in addition to those of the medical inspector of the gaol; and every one of them testified that these men were shamming madness. And, when his right hon. Friend came into office in February of last year, he reported in that House that he had put the case specially before Dr. Maudsley and Dr. Nicholson, and that these two specialists had both reported to him that these men had been shamming, and that they had not suffered in any way, either mentally or bodily, during the years of their incarceration. Dr. Maudsley, he understood, made a fresh report in August last in conjunction with another medical officer, and in this he had reported in a sense which at present he could not gauge, because the report had not been published. But if it was on the testimony of Dr. Maudsley that these men were released from prison, they had the evidence of these last three days in the House of Commons, when one of these four men—Daly—was actually sitting underneath the gallery after having had triumphal processions in different parts of Ireland—[*Nationalist cheers*]—and being the hero of one banquet after another, and making speeches which in the Irish papers occupied three columns ["Hear, hear," *from the Nationalists.*] Yes, hon. Gentlemen cried "hear, hear," but the only justification for the release of the prisoners was that they were either mad or on the point of death. What was the value of Dr. Maudsley's report when he was completely at issue with the reports of all other Commissioners who had examined into their condition in the course of the last nine or ten years? Who was to say that these men who shammed madness so well were not shamming at this moment, and that they had been released on the testimony and by the advice of a doctor whose judgment had been proved to be utterly worthless by the presence in this House of the individual on whom he passed judgment? [*Cheers.*] He complained very much of the reticence of his right hon. Friend in this matter. The American papers of the last seven months had been full of the vilest and most abominable imputations against the predecessor in office of his right hon. Friend, and against the gaolers and doctors and other officers. "Bloody Asquith"—[*laughter*]—was a heading that occurred continuously. "The Ruffian Asquith"—[*laughter*]—was another prominent head-line. [*Interruption from Nationalist members.*]

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask hon. Members to give the hon. Member who is addressing the House a fair and proper hearing.

Sir H. HOWORTH said that these phrases might arouse laughter on the other side, but when they were accompanied by phrases involving flattery to officials who happened to sit on the Ministerial side at present, and for whom they all had the highest respect, he could not help feeling that these phrases were rather a shame to the Ministerial side which they could by no means be proud of. He and his Friends felt that the right hon. Gentleman opposite when in office was cheered very loudly from the Unionist benches for his courageous conduct—doubly courageous considering the pressure behind him. [*Ministerial cheers.*] That pressure was far greater than any which could be felt by the present Home Secretary; and he and his Friends did not like to think that this reversal of the decision of the right hon. Gentleman opposite might have the very painful result that no future Liberal Home Secretary would dare to face the responsibility and difficulty of resisting pressure from behind, because he would be told that others would do what he had been courageous enough to refuse to do. [*Cheers.*] Not only ought the predecessors of the present Home Secretary to be considered, but the officials of the gaols also. They had been denounced in shameless language—[*cheers*]—and had been accused of the basest cruelty. If those charges were true, the prison officials ought to be removed from their offices. If they were not, then the natural guardian and protector of the officials—the Home Secretary—ought immediately to give an answer which would be complete—an answer based on the documents in his hands proving the whole of the charges to be utterly slanderous. [*Cheers.*] He could not understand why there should be any hesitation about publishing the doctors' Reports in these cases. In a Court of law, where a doctor was called to prove anything his evidence was published. Over and over again in the Blue-books doctors' Reports had been published. The doctor was acting in a perfectly responsible manner; he was paid a fee for his opinion, and in these critical cases—it was not necessary in ordinary cases—where special Commissions of Inquiry had been appointed and where a great deal of public discussion had taken place, the doctors' opinions ought to be published. This might seem a small matter if it were limited to the case of the four dynamiters. But there were other cases where public opinion had been inclined to the belief that the benevolence of the Home Office had been a stain upon the previous traditions of that office. Though it might be quite right now to have a kind of Star Chamber on a small scale, whose inquiries and decisions were secret, and based on secret evidence, and whose duties were to revise the findings of Judges and juries arrived at in open Court, face to face with the witnesses and the evidence, yet it might be that seeds were being sown which would presently have bitter fruit when some one, without the high character and antecedents of the present Home Secretary, occupied his office. For that reason many felt that it would be very expedient if some Royal Commission were appointed to inquire into the whole system under which the supervision of ordinary criminals was now conducted by the Home Office officials. It would be a good thing if some set of rules were drawn up by which the personal equation of the Home Secretary for the time being should be restricted. He had tried to show why the exercise of the Home Secretary's judgment in this particular case had not been satisfactorily explained to those who looked with great suspicion upon the interference with the ordinary course of justice by the Home Office. He hoped that he had not said a word which would imply that the integrity of the Home Secretary was questioned in any way. They differed from the judgment of the right hon. Gentleman in the matter, and they would continue to differ from it; but it was due to himself to repeat the protest he had made at an early stage of his speech, that in raising this discussion he meant to cast no imputation on the Home Secretary. If there was any word or expression of his that bore any other sense he hoped it would be cancelled.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down ended his speech by expressing the hope that, if any phrase of his was regarded as an imputation upon my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, that phrase might be erased. Sir, the whole speech of the hon. Gentleman, from the first to the last word he uttered, was not merely an imputation upon the judgment of my right hon. Friend—which he was perfectly at liberty to call in question—but it was an imputation upon the honour, not only of my right hon. Friend, but of every man that sits upon this Bench. [*Cheers.*] I shall leave my right hon. Friend on a subsequent day—for this Debate will not conclude to-night—to deal in detail with the statements of the hon. Gentleman; but I cannot allow what the hon. Gentleman has said to pass for one moment without stating on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government that I regard the imputation he has deliberately thrown upon us—by insinuation, perhaps, more than by direct statement, but insinuations that could not be mistaken in any part of the House—[*cheers*]—that I regard those imputations as utterly unworthy of a Member of the Party to which he belongs—[*renewed cheers*]—and that either we who sit upon this Bench are unfit to lead the Party any longer, or else he himself would have found some difficulty in following us. [*Irish cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman, from beginning to end of his speech, has either stated or insinuated in unmistakable terms that the action of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary in releasing the four dynamiters in August last was dictated, not by his duty as

Home Secretary, but by his interests as a politician. ["Hear, hear!"] He has stated, or he has insinuated, that my right hon. Friend has started a new principle of policy in the Home Office. He has stated, or he has insinuated, that my right hon. Friend has constituted himself, for the first time in the history of the Home Office, a kind of court of appeal—[*cries of* "Star Chamber"]—yes, "Star Chamber"; that was the phrase of the hon. Gentleman—that my right hon. Friend has constituted himself the chief of a secret court, or Star Chamber, whose deliberations are carried on far from the public gaze, and whose verdicts are given, not in consonance with justice or with the criminal law of the country, but in order to serve the particular Party ends of a particular Party at a particular moment. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know whether he thought the head of that Star Chamber acted or did not act in concert with his colleagues. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman supposed that my right hon. Friend said to himself in the secrecy of his chamber—

> "It may help the Government to let out this man or that man, and I will do it without consultation with my colleagues,"

or whether, on the other hand, he supposed my right hon. Friend came to the Cabinet and said—

> "It may be desirable at the present moment to conciliate this section or that section of our political opponents, and I think I could so manipulate medical reports that a plausible case might be made out for a release, and if my colleagues think it desirable I am ready to carry it out."

I know not which of these hypotheses is accepted by the hon. Gentleman. But one of the two must be accepted by him. Either he thinks my right hon. Friend is utterly unworthy of the place he occupies, or he thinks my right hon. Friend is one of the band of conspirators who are perfectly ready to sell the honour of their country for a temporary Parliamentary triumph. [*Cheers.*] Sir, let me tell the hon. Gentleman that so long as he confines himself to an attack upon the administrative ability of my right hon. Friend, whatever else we may have thought of him, we should not think that he was going beyond the bounds which ought to limit Parliamentary criticism, even Parliamentary criticism that comes from those who are opposed to us in politics. ["Hear, hear!"] But when he attacks, not the prudence or the discretion of a particular Minister, or the prudence or the discretion of the Cabinet as a whole, but their honour as politicians and as men, then, in my judgment, he oversteps the limits. [*Cheers.*] I will only content myself to-night with one statement, for the time is brief, and I do not mean to discuss the medical reports as to the health of this criminal or that criminal. Let me only conclude by saying that my right hon. Friend never consulted his colleagues upon the decision which he came to, and that the invariable tradition of the office to which he belongs is that such decisions should be taken upon the authority of the Minister, and upon his alone. [*Cheers.*] I believe my right hon. Friend was actuated by a sound discretion in the matter, but that whether he was right or whether he was wrong he initiated no new practice, he started no new principles, but he followed with undeviating fidelity the traditions which have regulated the great office of which he is head, not for one Ministry, nor for two Ministries, but for generations. Sir, that statement which I make now to the House I have made in public before, and that statement was before the hon. Gentleman before he uttered the words to which we have listened. ["Hear, hear!"] I have no hope that by repeating those words I shall affect his judgment or the judgment of any other man, if another man there be who is ready to follow him in the line of argument which he has adopted to-night; but I am convinced that, speaking as I do not merely to friends, but to opponents, there is not a man in this House except the hon. Gentleman who is not prepared to accept with absolute credence the statement which I have now made upon my honour as a Minister of the Crown. [*Loud cheers.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) thought it was matter for regret that his right hon. Friend had imported into the discussion a warmth which was scarcely called for by the speech to which he responded. He had listened very carefully to the remarks of his hon. Friend behind him, and if he were to criticise them he should say that with a reiteration, which was, he thought, uncalled for, he had not in any shape or form made any attack upon the Home Secretary except in respect of his judgment. [*Laughter.*] His hon. Friend made no attack upon the right hon. Gentleman's character or honour. The Home Secretary had explained his own view of the situation on more than one occasion, and he had placed these prisoners in a category which they had never been in before—that of political prisoners.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Do I understand my right hon. Friend to deny that?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Certainly; I have always denied it.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said he was very glad then to have an opportunity of enabling his right hon. Friend to give a more emphatic contradiction to the statement contained in "Hansard" (page 415) to the effect that on February 14th, 1896, he said that the ground upon which hon. Members had asked for this amnesty was because it was said that these men were political prisoners; that he was willing to admit that a distinction might properly be drawn between political and other prisoners; and that he was willing to admit that these men might be properly regarded in the light of being political prisoners because they were tried under the Treason Felony Act. If that was not putting them in the category of political prisoners he should like to know what was. Doubtless, from what his right hon. Friend had said that report was inaccurate—[*laughter*]—but it had been in the library of the House for 11 months, and he thought his right hon. Friend should have taken some public opportunity, other than that of an interjection in the course of the present Debate, of contradicting that statement of "Hansard." His right hon. Friend the Home Secretary also said, on August 16th, 1895 (page 223 of "Hansard") that he was not going to argue whether these were political prisoners or not, these men were tried under the Treason Felony Act—a statement which was nearly upon all fours with that to which he had already referred. He protested against the notion that Members were to be debarred from expressing their honest opinion upon the public acts of a Minister because he happened to be a political associate. He contended that prison doctors were likely to be more reliable authorities upon malingering than the most eminent private practitioners.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said that, in the case of the four prisoners, the report upon which he acted, in the first instance, was that of the Chief Medical Inspector of Prisons. He was so impressed by his report that he thought it should be strengthened by the highest medical opinion.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said the Home Secretary seemed to think that when a prisoner was suffering from insanity his duty was to let him loose on society. If these men were insane, they should have been sent to Broadmoor, especially if their insanity took the form of homicidal tendency. No one would question the motives of the right hon. Gentleman, but his judgment was seriously questioned. When they were brought to his knowledge he always contradicted the sinister rumours rife throughout the country during the recess in consequence of the apparently unaccountable release of these prisoners. It was rumoured that the policy of the Government had changed, that they had thrown over their own supporters, that they had flung to the winds their obligation to the owners of land in Ireland, and were now going to kill their foes with kindness, and were going to rely for support on the representatives of what were called the bulk of the Irish people. The failure of justice at the Old Bailey was associated with a general tendency of that kind. He thought his hon. Friend was justified in making the statement he had. What was the line the House of Commons ought to take in this matter? He hoped he had already enabled the Home Secretary to withdraw from "Hansard" what was a very ugly blot upon its pages—namely, the endorsement, for the first time by a responsible Minister of the Crown, that persons who flung dynamite, right, left and centre, amongst innocent persons were to be thought guilty of a political crime. He hoped also the House of Commons would allow no doubt to remain on the public mind that this must not be done again. He confessed having grave doubts whether they should not find, under some pretext or other, more of these dangerous persons let loose on society. What was the ground the Home Secretary took now in resisting the demand for further releases? His right hon. Friend, instead of saying that he had already burned his fingers by listening to the Gentlemen opposite, and that he had no wish to have a repetition of his recent experiences—did what? He said only two days ago:

> "It has been a very great source of regret to myself that I have not been able to see my way to recommend the exercise of Her Majesty's prerogative of mercy towards these treason-felony prisoners now in Portland. I am afraid I am not able to give any assurance at the present moment that would be entirely satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen opposite."

If that was the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman approached his duties, they did not know what day they might not hear that a further consignment of criminal lunatics had been let loose on society. He thought the thanks of the House were due to the hon. Member for Salford for having brought this question in a temperate manner before them.

On the Motion of Mr. Michael Davitt, the Debate was adjourned till Monday next.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT).

*Sir C. DILKE asked the Leader of the House, with regard to the second order (Voluntary Schools, Aid Grant, etc.) which was down for Committee, whether it would not be better to place it on the Paper for a later day than Monday or Tuesday, as it was likely to lead to a long Debate.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY did not at all anticipate that the Resolution would be adopted without discussion, and he had no intention of bringing it on until the Debate on the Address had concluded.

Committee deferred till Monday.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES).

Adjourned Debate on Motion for leave to bring in a Bill [21st January] further adjourned till Monday next.

Adjourned at Three minutes
before Twelve o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, January 25th 1897.

LORD PENRHYN'S QUARRIES (CORRESPONDENCE).

Return [presented 22nd January] to be printed.—[No. 31.]

QUESTIONS.

APPOINTMENTS OF NEW COMMERCIAL ATTACHÉS.

SIR **HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the new Commercial Secretaries to European Embassies have taken possession of their posts, and if at every Embassy or Legation within the group of countries assigned to each Commercial Secretary a Secretary or Attaché will be assigned the duty of acting as assistant and correspondent to the Commercial Secretary when absent; and, if Lord Salisbury's instructions to the Commercial Secretaries can be laid upon the Table, as well as the provisions for the immediate publication to the mercantile community of this country of the information they obtain?

*THE **UNDER SECRETARY** OF **STATE** FOR **FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): Mr. Austin Lee has for some time been discharging his duties as Commercial Attaché at Paris. The Commercial Attachés to be stationed at Berlin and Madrid respectively have been appointed and are about to take up their new posts. The Ambassador or Minister will in each case decide, in consultation with the Commercial Attaché, what are the most suitable arrangements to be made for the transaction of commercial work in the absence of the latter; but it will probably be better to allow some elasticity in making these arrangements than to have any fixed plan in advance. The instructions to the Commercial Attachés will be laid in a Parliamentary Paper, which it is proposed shortly to present, showing the steps that have recently been taken for the assistance of British trade. No written regulations exist as to the immediate publication of commercial information, but arrangements have for some time been in force in the Foreign Office and at the Board of Trade for giving prompt publicity to any news of interest to the mercantile community.

MR. **GIBSON BOWLES** (Lynn Regis) asked whether Mr. Austin Lee had had an opportunity of visiting, or had visited, any of the other countries besides France to which his commercial business applied?

*MR. **CURZON**: Yes; under our revised scheme for Commercial Attachéships the sphere of Mr. Austin Lee's operations is France and Belgium, and Mr. Lee is, I believe, acquainted with Belgium as well as France.

MR. **GIBSON BOWLES**: He has not been in Belgium.

AUTUMN MANŒUVRES (ALDERSHOT).

MR. **A. F. JEFFREYS** (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any compensation will be given to the troops engaged in the Autumn Manœuvres at Aldershot on account of the loss and damage they sustained from injury to their clothing by the excessive and continuous rain during those manœuvres?

*THE **UNDER SECRETARY** OF **STATE** FOR **WAR** (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): In consideration of the unusually bad weather prevailing during the late manœuvres at Aldershot, and the consequent damage to clothing, it has been decided to authorise a grant of 4d. to each soldier for each day that he was engaged on manœuvres. This grant is in accordance with allowances previously given under similar circumstances.

TAXATION (IRELAND).

MR. **JEFFREYS**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, (1) whether it is a fact that in Ireland no house tax or land tax is levied, nor any railway passengers' tax; that no licences are required for keeping carriages or men servants; and that the licence for keeping a dog is only one-third of the similar tax in Great Britain; and, (2) whether, in his next Finance Bill, he will alter these anomalies of taxation in different parts of the United Kingdom?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I believe that the statements contained in the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's question are, speaking generally, correct, but of course this fact can only be considered as part of the general subject.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) inquired whether the land tax referred to in the first part of the question was not a tax levied under an Act of 1798 on a valuation 205 years old?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I do not think, even if the hon. Member is correct, that rebuts the fact that the Act does not apply to Ireland.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked whether the total amount of these exceptions was only about £150,000 a year, while the over taxation of Ireland as ascertained by the Royal Commission was something like £3,000,000 a year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: No one can possibly tell what the amount of the exemptions may be, as the taxes do not extend to Ireland.

MR. LOUGH: Do not the Royal Commission themselves estimate—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman cannot convert the question into a debate. [*A laugh.*]

SHUTTLE GUARDS.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is intended to require manufacturers in the texile industries to use shuttle guards; whether he is aware that, owing to the weight of the material, such guards are quite unnecessary in the jute trade; and, whether he is willing to consider representations that may be made to him on the subject both by the workpeople and their employers?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): It is intended to require the provision of shuttle guards wherever there is found to be serious danger to the workpeople which can be removed by their use. I understand that shuttle accidents, although no doubt less common than in certain other texile processes, are not unknown in the jute manufacture, and I am not therefore prepared to say that necessity may not arise for requiring guards. I shall be glad, of course, to consider any representations that may be made to me on the subject.

CANADIAN MAIL SERVICE.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state what progress has been made in the negotiations for an improved mail service to Canada; and whether the ports of arrival and departure and the speed of the mail steamers have now been fixed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): No, sir; I am unable to give any information. The matter is still under the consideration of the Government of the Dominion of Canada.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that in the Tralee Union 156 labourers' cottages have been built prior to 1891; that the provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1896 do not apply in consequence to the annual charges in respect of these cottages; that if they did apply, it would mean a relief of £500 a year to the ratepayers of the Tralee Union; and, inasmuch as there are between 8,000 and 9,000 labourers' cottages throughout Ireland, in respect of which no relief from the Act of last year can be obtained, he will consider the advisability of suspending the allocation of the grant in aid of the erection of labourers' cottages under the Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1896 until a short

Act is passed to allow the inclusion in the grant of cottages built prior to 1891?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am not prepared to introduce further legislation on this subject. The amendment in the law suggested by the hon. Baronet was considered by the Government at the time when the Act of last year was under discussion, but was not adopted.

RAILWAY CONNECTIONS (IRELAND).

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that for years past travellers on the connecting line between the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford and the Great Southern and Western Railway Companies' systems, via Bagnalstown and Ballywilliam, have been subjected to much inconvenience owing to the want of connection between their respective trains; and, whether he can use any influence with the railway companies concerned to induce them to revise their time tables so as to meet the public convenience?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): In answer to communications, the Railway Company inform me that a new time table has been drawn up for the purpose of improving the present arrangements at Ballywilliam, and that the negotiations for carrying it into effect are practically complete.

TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury if he can state the reasons for the delay in carrying out the extinction of the Treasury liability in respect of the Tralee and Dingle Railway; and if he can give any information as to when the transaction will be brought to a close?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The proposal for redemption of the liability referred to was brought before the Committee of the Irish Privy Council on the 11th November, 1896. It was assented to and referred by the Committee to the Irish Law Officers in order that the necessary Order, dealing with the payment and application of the capital sum and other points arising under the Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1895, might be prepared. It is understood that the Order will be ready in a few days, after which the amount required to effect the proposed redemption will be rendered available without unnecessary delay, so as to enable the matter to be completed.

DRAWING (IRISH SCHOOLS).

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) on what grounds was the teacher of Larah Male National School, County Cavan, whose pupils were examined on drawing by the Inspector on 31st August last, refused results fees; (2) is he aware that in about two-thirds of the schools in Ireland drawing is not taught, owing to the difficulty of getting the Treasury to provide the money, except on conditions which proved to be impracticable; (3) has the Dublin Trades Council sent the Education Commissioners a Resolution requesting that drawing be taught in all national schools; and (4) whether, seeing that Head Inspectors Hamilton and Connellan have reported that drawing can be successfully taught by teachers unable to obtain formal certificates in drawing, and that the teacher in question has submitted satisfactory specimens of drawing executed by him to the Education Commissioners, will he reconsider his decision and cause results fees to be paid in such cases?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The District Inspector gave the teacher of the school referred to an opportunity of executing a specimen of drawing at the examination held in August last, but the teacher did not avail himself of the opportunity, and consequently the Commissioners are unable to satisfy themselves as to his competency to give efficient instruction in that subject. It is true that in a large proportion of national schools drawing is not taught. The scale of results fees sanctioned by the Treasury in drawing varies from 2s. 6d. to 5s. for each pupil who obtains a pass. This is available for every national school where a teacher qualified in the subject is employed. The resolution referred to in the third paragraph has been received. The teacher of the Larah

School submitted specimens of map drawing alleged by him to have been executed so far back as 1884, but these could not be regarded as sufficient evidence of qualification to give instruction in freehand drawing. The Commissioners, however, will give him another opportunity of satisfying them as to his competency, and should the result be satisfactory they will sanction the payment of results fees in his case. I need hardly add that the decision in these matters rests, not with the Chief Secretary, but with the Commissioners.

GRANGEGORMAN PRISON, DUBLIN.

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether prison officials in Ireland are entitled, by the terms of their appointments, to fire and light in their rooms during the six winter months; and if so, why are all the officials in Grangegorman Prison, Dublin, except the superintendent, deprived of this right?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Subordinate prison officers, and some of the superior officers are entitled by the terms of their appointment to fuel and light during the winter months, and there is no difference, I am informed, between the regulations in force in this respect at Grangegorman and at other prisons.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Asked whether Grangegorman was not a female prison, and whether that did not make an important difference?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that Grangegorman was a female prison, and he understood the arrangement was that where there was no mess room any female warder applying for a fire in her bedroom would, under ordinary circumstances, be granted one. He was not sure that under any circumstances a fire had been refused.

WRECK (INDIAN TROOPSHIP "WARREN HASTINGS."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is in a position to state if, at the time or since the wreck of the Indian troopship *Warren Hastings,* which occurred on the 14th January, 1897, on the Island of Reunion, with Headquarters 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifles and half a Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment on board, any of the officers' and men's baggage, men's property, etc., was saved?

*MR. BRODRICK: It is known that a small quantity of cabin baggage was saved from the troopship *Warren Hastings*, and it is hoped that more baggage and the regimental plate may yet be recovered.

MR. PERCY THORNTON (Clapham) asked what had become of the crew?

*MR. BRODRICK thought that the crew were on the Island of Reunion. He believed that all were saved but two natives.

FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS (COUNTY MONAGHAN.)

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a large number of tenants on the Shirley estate, County Monaghan, have made application to the Irish Land Commissioners to have fair rents fixed on their holdings; and whether he can state when the hearing of these cases will take place?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: About 40 applications have been received from the estate referred to, and the Land Commission intend to list these for hearing in about a month's time.

MR. M. McCARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a circular issued by order of the Land Commission, dated 23rd November last, requiring in respect of all second statutory term applications served the record number and date of order or agreement whereby the fair rent for first statutory term was fixed; and is he aware that it was therein stated that if these particulars were not furnished to the landlord and Land Commission within six weeks, the application would be struck out, and that the form of application includes all the particulars required in that in respect of the first statutory term, and that the striking out would involve a loss to the tenant of the reduction in one gale's rent; and whether he will state the number of applications so struck out?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The circular in question explained that the rules and forms issued by the Land Commission required that the particulars of information indicated should be stated, and that in the absence of such information it was impossible that the application could be identified with certainty at the office of the Land Commission with the file of proceedings at the time the fair rent was fixed for a first statutory term. The forms prescribed for applications for second term cases, which were issued in September, 1895, and again in September, 1896, distinctly state that the particulars "must be accurately filled up." The circular was issued in 3,428 cases. In 2,675 cases the terms of the notice had been complied with, and in 753 cases the applications have been struck out for non-compliance. The striking out of the application might involve a loss to the tenant of the reduction in one gale's rent, though not necessarily.

DISTRESS (CONNEMARA.)

MR. W. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the very serious distress prevailing in Connemara, County Galway, owing to the failure of the crops last autumn and the extreme poverty of the soil, he will take into his consideration the necessity of relieving such distress at the earliest possible moment?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My information is to the effect that abnormal distress does not at present exist in this district. A very careful supervision is exercised over the district, and any change in the circumstances and prospects of the poorer classes will at once be brought under notice of Government.

ST. JUDE'S SCHOOL, BETHNAL GREEN.

MR. ALFRED HUTTON, (York W. R., Morley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether St. Jude's School, Bethnal Green, which was recently admitted to annual grants, conforms to the rules of planning laid down in the Code; and, if not, why it was admitted to grants?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (SIR JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): St. Jude's National School was an old school, and does not conform to the Rules in the Code, which are intended principally for new schools.

CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT (DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUMS).

MR. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the rule of the Civil Service requiring officials to retire at the age of 65 years, applies to Resident Medical Superintendents of District Lunatic Asylums and their assistants?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; the rule in question applies only to permanent Civil Servants of the Crown, and the Officers of the Lunatic Asylums are not Civil Servants.

DANGEROUS TRADES.

MR. R. McKENNA (Monmouth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, in view of the fact that seven trades were reported on, in the interim Report by the Committee appointed to inquire into the Dangerous Trades, and that the Committee state these seven were selected as greatly in need of definite regulation, special rules have been issued for any of these trades; and, if so, for how many?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Out of the seven processes named in the Report, I have already seen my way to certifying two as dangerous under the Act of 1891. Special rules embodying most of the recommendations of the Committee, have been issued for one of these, the bottling of ærated waters, and will shortly be issued for the other, the vulcanizing of indiarubber by means of bisulphide of carbon. With regard to the remaining five, a similar course will probably be necessary in the case of some, if not all; but there are legal and administrative considerations which make it difficult to give full and adequate effect in the form of special rules to the suggestions of the Committee. For the present, therefore, I must reserve my decision on this point, but in the meantime steps are being taken by the factory inspectors to watch these processes and to secure the improvement of the conditions under which the work is carried on.

QUEEN'S REIGN (ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS).

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, by introduction in the Code or by instructions to the teachers, attention will be directed during the present year in the various schools throughout the country to the events which have occurred throughout the Empire during the 60 years of Her Majesty's reign, with special reference to the extension of Her dominions and the moral and material advancement of Her people?

SIR JOHN GORST: The Committee of Council have sufficient confidence in the patriotism and loyalty of the managers and teachers of elementary schools to leave them to impart suitable information to children as to the character of Her Majesty's long reign, without special instructions.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS (HEYWOOD).

MR. J. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts., Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education—(1) whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Reports of the Sanitary Inspector and the Medical Officer of Health of the Corporation of Heywood, and of the Architect of the Education Department, relative to the sanitary condition of St. John's school in that town; (2) whether the alterations recommended in such reports have been effected and the schoolroom meets the requirements of the Department; (3) whether the Town Council have requested the Department to inquire into the sanitary condition of the other public schools in the town, and whether such inquiry will be instituted; (4) whether he is aware that, in consequence of the closing of the Heywood United Methodist Free Church School, a large number of the scholars are playing in the streets, the parents refusing to send them to the Episcopalian or Roman Catholic schools; (5) and whether, as the Town Council have for the second time requested the Department to order the appointment of a school board, their request will be complied with?

SIR JOHN GORST: I shall be happy to show these Reports to the hon. Member, and will lay them on the Table if he wishes for them. The alterations recommended at St. John's School are now being carried out. The Town Council have made such a request and the County Council have made inquiries from their Inspector. The answer to the fourth paragraph is "Yes." The Town Council have again passed a resolution asking for a school board by a diminished majority. Their request is now under the consideration of the Committee of Council.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the report of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1896, has yet been issued; and if not, can he say why the issue of the report has been so long delayed?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the report in question has been printed and will be in the hands of Members in the course of a few days.

HORSE BREEDING (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how much money has been spent in the years ended 31st March, 1895 and 1896, by the Irish Congested Districts Board in experiments on horse breeding at the Bray stud farm?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not quite understand what the hon. Member means by "experiments" on horse breeding. The ordinary expenditure on the stud farm at Shankill, near Dublin, for the year ended March 31st, 1895, amounted to £1,126 15s. 5d., and for the year ended March 31st, 1896, to £1,146 9s. 2d.

IRISH PUBLIC BOARDS (AUDIT).

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what was the amount of money charged against local public boards in Ireland for the auditing of their accounts by Local Government Board auditors for the year ended 31st December, 1895; and for what purpose are moneys so charged and collected by the Local Government Board devoted?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The assessments on governing bodies of towns and of lunatic asylums in Ireland are made in respect of the year ended in August of each year; and the Grand Jury fee is assessed on the accounts of the spring and summer Assizes in each year. The amount so assessed on the governing bodies of towns for the year ended August, 1895, was £1,040 4s. 6d., and of lunatic asylums, £605 16s.; and the fees levied on Grand Jury accounts for spring and summer Assizes for 1895 amounted to £2,515 2s. These assessments, which are made in accordance with Statute, are appropriated in aid of the Vote for auditors' salaries and expenses.

FISHGUARD BAY RAILWAY.

Mr. W. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has been in communication with the Fishguard Bay Railway and Pier Company in regard to a memorial received by him last year from the inhabitants of Goodwick, Pembrokeshire, in reference to the alleged powers proposed to be exercised by the company; and what steps does he propose to take to preserve to the fishermen and inhabitants generally the existing access to the seashore, which would be seriously interfered with by the company's proposals?

Mr. RITCHIE: I am still in communication with the Fishguard and Rosslare Railway and Harbours Company upon the subject of the works they propose to construct in Fishguard Bay, and am awaiting a statement from the Company as to the facilities they are prepared to provide for boats landing, &c., at Goodwick, if the existing pier there is interfered with. The representations contained in the memorial referred to by the hon. Member will continue to receive my careful consideration.

LAND PURCHASE (COUNTY LONGFORD).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in 1893 the tenants on the estate of Lord Annally, in the county of Longford, were induced to sign undertakings to purchase their holdings when called on to do so, and that under that arrangement they were to continue paying the old rents until the agreements were signed; could he ascertain what is the cause of the delay in having these agreements signed, the property having passed under a receiver, who alleges that their undertaking to purchase prevents them entering court to have a rent fixed; and can he move the Land Commission to direct an immediate inquiry into this matter with a view to a remedy?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: In answer to the hon. Member's previous questions on this subject last Session, I stated that the estate had been inspected by the Land Commission, and that, as to a large number of tenants, advances were sanctioned by the Commission subject to the rental being settled to enable them to make an offer to purchase from the Land Judge. The delay entirely occurred in the settlement of the rental. The Registrar of the Land Judge's Court was informed by the solicitor having carriage of the proceedings that the rental is now settled in draft, and that a copy for the Judge's signature will be ready in a day or two.

FEE FARM TENANTS (COUNTY LONGFORD).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the fee farm tenants in the townlands of Rabbit Park, Grillagh, Loughil, and Knappogue, in County Longford, are compelled annually to pay an income tax of 1s. 3d. in the £, based on a valuation of produce made so far back as 1826; and that it was then enacted that a valuation of products would take place every seven years, but that no such valuation has ever since been made; and can he say whether the Government intend to order a valuation for the purposes of reducing the present heavy impost?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension. Income tax in Ireland is assessed under Schedules A and B on the annual value of the several tenements and rateable hereditaments. This annual value is based on Griffiths' valuation, made between 1852 and 1864. Since then the value of the land has not been changed, nor is there any provision in the Valuation Acts for a re-valuation every seven years. At no time has income tax in Ireland been at the rate of 1s. 3d. in the £.

BELFAST BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the reports appearing in the Belfast morning papers of Wednesday last of the discussion before the Belfast Board of Guardians about the dispute between Nurse Craig and Nurse King; and whether, considering that Nurse Craig has been so long a tried and trusted official, and the present unsatisfactory state of the case, he will suggest that a sworn Inquiry be held by the Local Government Board into the matter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I have seen the newspaper report referred to. The Local Government Board have addressed the Guardians in this matter requesting that Nurse Craig may be called upon to furnish a written explanation respecting the complaint made against her. The Guardians will have the matter under their consideration to-morrow and the Local Government will await their action before taking further steps.

NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) whether his attention has been called to the circumstances under which Head Inspector Sullivan, of the National Board of Education, was promoted from Galway to the South Dublin district in October, 1896, and again re-transferred to Galway within a few days of his arrival in Dublin; (2) whether the custom for many years of having one Protestant and one Catholic Head Inspector in charge of the two Dublin districts has been departed from in this instance by replacing Head Inspector Sullivan with a second Protestant Head Inspector; (3) what are the reasons for depressing Head Inspector Sullivan by sending him back to the district from which he had been promoted; (4) and if he will have any objection to lay upon the Table copies of the Correspondence relating to this case, and of any minutes of the National Board referring to it?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have referred the Question to the Commissioners of National Education who report as follows: Mr. Sullivan's removals were not in the nature of either promotion or depression. On the death of Mr. Connellan, a Roman Catholic, and one of the two head inspectors in charge of the Dublin circuit, Mr. Sullivan was transferred from Galway to the vacancy in Dublin. Subsequently, however, in connection with the question of a better distribution of head inspectors, and with the fact that there had not been a Roman Catholic head inspector in charge of Belfast District for many years past, it was deemed expedient to place that district in charge of Mr. Sullivan, and to transfer a Presbyterian head inspector to Dublin. Mr. Sullivan, however, requested not to be sent to Belfast. For several years the two inspectors in simultaneous charge of the Dublin district were Roman Catholic and Protestant respectively, but this was neither a regulation nor a uniform custom, as for twelve years from 1872 to 1884, two Protestant head inspectors were in joint charge. No idea of depressing Mr. Sullivan entered into the arrangements, which the Commissioners state were made with a view to the educational interests of the county at large. As regards the fourth paragraph, the Commissioners regard as confidential all correspondence between them and their officers, as well as the minutes of the Board relating thereto, and it would be without precedent, therefore, to lay such documents on the Table of the House.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork City): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the time table for the new Irish Mail Service has yet been definitely decided on; and, if so, whether he can state what it is?

*Mr. **HANBURY**: As the hon. Member is aware, I undertook, on behalf of the Postmaster General, at the close of last Session, that the time table for the new Irish Mail Service between London and Dublin should not be finally settled until the present Session. Subject to this understanding, the whole subject has been re-examined during the Recess, with the object of meeting, as far as possible, the wishes of the Irish representatives. The down night mail will leave Euston at 8.45 p.m., in lieu of 8.20 p.m., and will reach Dublin at 5.49 a.m. (Irish time), instead of 6.29 a m.—that is, 40 minutes earlier than at present; while the up night mail train will leave Dublin at 8 p.m. (Irish time), instead of 7.10 p.m.—that is, 50 minutes later than at present, and will reach Euston at 6.10 a.m., in lieu of 6.15 a.m. The present interval in Dublin between the arrival of the mail in the morning and the departure of the return mail in the evening will thus be lengthened by an hour and a-half. In regard to the day mail, the down mail will leave Euston, as at present, at 7.15 a.m., and reach Dublin at 4.52 p.m. (Irish time), instead of 5.22 p.m.—that is, half-an-hour earlier; and the up mail will leave Dublin at 7.10 a.m. (Irish time), instead of 6.40 a.m.—that is, half-an-hour later, and reach Euston, as at present, at 5.45 p.m.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman whether arrangements had yet been made with the Irish railway companies so as to give the time table to Cork and Belfast?

*Mr. **HANBURY** said the arrangements with the companies on the Irish side had not yet been arrived at.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked whether it was not possible to give some more time in regard to the morning mail leaving London for Dublin; and whether this was not the only train in regard to which no additional time was given?

*Mr. **HANBURY** replied that he was very anxious himself about the matter, and he had pressed the companies as far possible, but this was the utmost concession they would make.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would press on the London and North Western Railway Company the advisability of starting their morning mail a little later?

*Mr. **HANBURY**: Yes.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick), asked the right hon. Gentleman whether an arrangement could not be made by which a conference could be held between the Mails Committee and the Postmaster General before the matter was finally settled?

*Mr. **SPEAKER**: Order, order! The Question on the Paper has been fully answered. ["Hear, hear."]

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General has been able to arrange with the London and North Western Railway Company for an acceleration on the mail trains from Euston to Holyhead; and whether he will, in any new contract, endeavour to arrange that third class shall be put on from Holyhead to Chester and from Chester to Holyhead?

*Mr. **HANBURY**: As I thought the hon. Member was aware, an arrangement was made some time ago with the London and North Western Railway Company, for accelerating, on and after the 1st April next, the mail trains which convey the Irish night mails between London and Holyhead. I am glad to be able to add that during the last few days the Railway Company has consented to further accelerate the down night mail by five minutes. The circumstances would not justify the Department incurring any expense in accelerating the day mail trains. As stated in reply to a question of the hon. Member in July last, communications have taken place between the Company and the Post Office on the subject of third class traffic, but the Company could not see their way to provide for third class passengers in the Irish mail trains.

Mr. PATRICK POWER (Waterford, E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman made no representation to the London and North Western Railway Company as to the advisability of attaching third class carriages to the mail trains?

*Mr. HANBURY: I gathered that that was the question of the hon. Member for Dublin, to which I have already replied. Communications have passed with a view to bring that about.

Mr. FIELD: Arising out of the reply to a former question, might I ask if the right. hon. Gentleman will arrange that we shall have an opportunity of considering the time table before it is finally adopted.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that did not arise out of this Question.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that the London and North Western Railway Company, while they declined to attach third class carriages to the mails at Holyhead, were constantly in the habit of putting them on at Chester, where they were in competition with other companies; and whether, in the negotiations, he would see that if the London and North Western Company would not put third class carriages on at Holyhead, they should not be allowed to put them on at Chester and so overload the mails.

*Mr. HANBURY: I do not know whether the Post Office has any power to impose that condition, but I will inquire into it.

Mr. FIELD: If the Post Office have not the power, who has?

[No answer was given.]

COMMITTALS TO ASSIZES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there would be any difficulty in preparing a return showing for the last two years the dates of committal to assizes of individual prisoners, the period of detention before tried, the offence for which tried, and before whom, distinguishing those who were convicted guilty, and those who were acquitted, and the sentence passed in each case?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: There would be very great difficulty in preparing a return of individual cases; but the question of giving similar information in a tabular form had already been engaging the attention of the department charged with the preparation of the judicial statistics, and the statistics for 1895, which are almost complete and will be published very soon, will contain tables that will probably answer the purpose which I understand the hon. Member has in view.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether the difficulty referred to was in respect to materials or in respect to the clerical labour worked, and if the statistics in preparation would show any undue detention of prisoners committed for trial?

*Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said the tables in the judicial statistics to be published in a few weeks would give the information suggested by Sir H. Poland and would probably meet the views of the hon. Member.

PARISH COUNCILLORS (SCOTLAND.)

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether a parish councillor in Scotland who has ceased to reside in the district which he represents, whose name is off the electoral roll, and who no longer pays rates, is entitled to retain his seat until the next election?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): The point raised by the hon. Member's question is one which can only be decided after trial in a court of law. Any opinion which I might now give would necessarily be ineffectual, as it would neither qualify nor disqualify the parish Councillor supposed. I must therefore decline to advise the hon. Member on the subject.

PRIVILEGE CAB SYSTEM.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in response to his request, he has received from a conference of the London cab proprietors and drivers a statement of the system which, in their opinion, would be a reasonable substitute for the privilege cab system now existing at the railway stations; whether he has obtained the opinion of the railway companies upon these proposals; and if he can see his way to summon a conference of representatives of the companies and the cab trade with a view of arranging how this public service may be carried on in future, so as to put an end to the friction which is at present existing?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I received such a statement in December last. The proposals it contained were substantially the same as those which I had received from the drivers in the previous May, and which the railway companies, to whom I communicated them, with an expression of my hope that they might be found to form the basis for a settlement satisfactory to both parties, were unable to accept. I should be very glad if such a conference as the hon. Member suggests could be arranged. I have done my best in the past to bring one about, and will do so again if I see the slightest prospect of success. ["Hear, hear."]

HEALTH OF TROOPS IN INDIA.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, if, in view of the Army Medical Report on the health of the troops in India, the Government will inquire into the whole facts of the case?

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Times* of Friday last to the effect that it is alleged in India that 522 soldiers per 1,000 are now incapacitated from duty by reason of contagious disease; and whether the Government propose speedily to deal with this question to prevent this evil from rendering inefficient the forces of the Crown in India, and from endangering the health and the lives of people in this country as the troops return home?

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the admission to hospital for venereal disease of the British Army in India amounted to 536 per thousand for the year 1895, an increase of 25·2 on the previous year; and what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): It is the case that the total aggregate admissions to hospital for venereal disease among the British troops in India amounted in the year 1895 to 522 per thousand, but this does not mean that 522 men per thousand were separately and individually affected, still less does it indicate that 522 soldiers per thousand are incapacitated for duty from this cause. It is calculated on the latest returns that an average permanent deduction of 46 per thousand is the loss entailed by these diseases. The facts as to the serious increase of this disease in India are now being inquired into by a Departmental Committee, on receipt of whose Report Her Majesty's Government will carefully consider the whole subject.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: May I take the 522 per thousand men to mean men who have passed through the hospital suffering from this particular form of disease?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes. It means the total number of admissions, but the same man may be admitted more than once.

MAJOR RASCH: Can the noble Lord tell us when the Report of the Departmental Committee will be in the hands of Members?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No, Sir. There is certain further information which may take a short time before we obtain it. But I think in the course of a few weeks the report will, I will not say be in the hands of Members, but certainly concluded.

SCHOOL FEE GRANT (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the intention of the Government to include in a Supplementary Estimate for the current year the amount of arrears of school fee grant admittedly due to Scotland on the same principle as he has agreed to pay the corresponding arrears to Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The Government have admitted, as I stated in the House on July 30th last, that Scotland must be treated with regard to these arrears on the same basis as Ireland. I am in communication with the Secretary for Scotland as to the purpose to which the money should be devoted. We have not yet arrived at a conclusion upon the subject; but, as at present advised, I do not think that any part of it will be required by way of a Supplementary Estimate for the current year.

LAND SUB-COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND).

Mr. McCARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give a list, by way of Return or otherwise, of the gentlemen who have been appointed Sub-Commissioners under the Irish Land Laws since 1st January, 1896, and also their respective residences, former occupations, and qualifications for the office?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am prepared to make a Return on lines somewhat similar to those upon which the last Return was based; perhaps the hon. Member will consult with me as to the exact terms to be adopted.

RIVER SUCK DRAINAGE.

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that very great discontent exists among the people taxed for the repayment of the loans (including £30,000 charged by the Treasury as interest) for the drainage of the River Suck, in many cases the drainage tax being equal to the farmer's rent; whether he can state what has been the rate of interest charged; and whether, in order to reduce the burdens on the present occupiers, he would be prepared to advise the Treasury to accede to the resolutions passed at the public meetings held on the subject, and extend the repayment of the loans over a period of 80 years?

***Mr. HANBURY**: As I have before explained, the occupiers have only to pay a sum representing the actual benefit to their interests resulting from the works on the basis of present prices, and the whole of the non-productive outlay over and above the Government Grant of £50,000 falls on the proprietors. I assume that the £30,000 mentioned by the hon. Member represents interest during construction. None of this falls on the occupiers. The rate of interest is fixed by the Suck Drainage Act 1890 at 3¼ per cent. The same Act fixes the period of repayment at 40 years. This arrangement was made when the Government granted the £50,000, and I do not see that the occupiers have made out any case of hardship which would justify legislation being sought to amend it.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that last November a constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary procured another man to personate him in an examination of constables for promotion; (2) will he explain why it was that whereas the personator was prosecuted at the police court, and fined for the offence, the constable was not immediately dismissed but merely transferred to another station, his dismissal only taking place later; (3) and whether, with a view to checking deception on the part of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and to secure their identification when they decline to give their names or give false names, he will sanction a regulation for the wearing of numbers on the uniforms of the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The sergeant, not a constable, who was personated on the occasion in question, was at once sent back to his station, and called upon to plead to charges against discipline involved in his conduct. He admitted the charges, and no avoidable delay took place in recommending his dismissal from the Force. He was not transferred from his station as alleged in the question. The last paragraph has no bearing upon the other portion of the question, inasmuch as the sergeant had lent his uniform to the personator.

Mr. MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly answer the last paragraph, as it is on the paper?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: If the hon. Member cares to ask a general question I will answer it. I have already replied, last Session, that, in my opinion, there is no sufficient ground for making such a charge.

Mr. MACNEILL: Since last Session has it been brought to the right hon. Gentleman's mind—I know it has—that on the 13th of May 1889, his brother, then Chief Secretary, admitted that the officers did not give their names when asked.

*MR. SPEAKER said the question was not in order.

MR. MACNEILL: Then I will ask the question to-morrow.

POST OFFICE (TROSSES, COUNTY DONEGAL).

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that two memorials signed by the representative inhabitants of the locality have been forwarded to the heads of the Postal Department, praying for the establishment of a post office in the village of Trosses, Donegal; whether it has been brought to his notice that under present arrangements much inconvenience is occasioned by the distance from Trosses of a post office, the letters being brought from Inver and left at the house of Mr. Charles Campbell, who also receives letters to be sent to Inver, and supplies stamps to the amount on an average of £2 per week; and whether the Postmaster General will sanction the establishment of a post office in Trosses, which would materially conduce to the benefit of a large district?

*MR. HANBURY: It cannot be found that any memorials have recently been received for the establishment of a post office at Trosses, Donegal. An application was made in 1894, when it appeared on inquiry that the amount of correspondence was not nearly sufficient to justify the establishment of an office. Inquiry shall again, however, be made, and the result communicated to the hon. Member.

CORK WINTER ASSIZES.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings at the late Winter Assizes in Cork; whether he is aware that in the agrarian case known as the Clonbanin case no less than 31 jurors were ordered by the Counsel for the Crown to stand by, also that in ordinary criminal cases as many as 24, 19, and 17 jurors, respectively were similarly treated; and whether in these cases the Crown Counsel acted by the instructions or with the sanction of the learned Attorney General?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I have up to this been unable to identify the cases in which it is alleged 19 and 17 jurors respectively were ordered by the Crown to stand aside. In reference to the two other cases, in the first of which the charge was for attacking the dwelling-house of the caretaker of an evicted farm, and in the second for a serious assault on the police, one of whom has, I fear, been thereby permanently injured, the Crown Solicitor reports to me that in directing jurors to stand aside to the numbers mentioned in the question, he acted in strict accordance with the directions contained in the Circular dated the 12th February, 1894, addressed to Crown Solicitors of Ireland during the time of the late Government, and that no juror was ordered to stand aside on the ground of his religion or politics, but simply because in the judgment of the Crown Solicitor, there was reason to believe the juror would not give an impartial verdict. The fact that in each case the accused, several in number, were members of the farming class, having extensive connections in the county, may account for the large number of challenges in each case. No special directions were given by me in either of these cases.

MR. FLYNN asked whether, as these were city jurors and had no connection with the locality, he was to understand that the right hon. Gentleman gave his support to the system of jury packing?

MR. MACNEILL inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the practice of ordering a juror to stand back was absolutely unknown in the English criminal courts?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question. The hon. Member proposes to ask a general question about the practice in England.

MR. FLYNN asked whether in this case the Crown Counsel acted by instructions of the right hon. Gentleman?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND: I have already said that the Crown Solicitor acted in strict accordance with the general directions contained in the circular, and that no special directions were given by me in any of these cases.

Mr. FLYNN gave notice that he would call attention to these cases on the Estimates.

IRISH-SPEAKING WITNESSES.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.) on behalf of the Member for West Waterford, (Mr. J. J. Shee) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that at petty sessions held in Dungarvan, County Waterford, on the 9th instant, a man named Patrick Connors was committed to prison for contempt of court by Mr. Orr, R.M., for answering in Irish questions put to him; whether the person who acts as interpreter for the Court was present at the time; how long was Connors kept in custody; whether he is aware that Connors, when in custody, explained that he was afraid that he could not speak what he wanted in English; and whether, seeing that by the last census in the barony of Decies within Drum, and the barony of Decies without Drum, over 50 per cent. of the population spoke Irish, and over 1,000 Irish only, any steps will be taken to protect Irish-speaking witnesses in such districts?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Patrick Connors was detained in custody for a couple of hours only on the occasion referred to. The solicitors on both sides expressed approval of the intention to compel Connors to give evidence in English, and when he notified his willingness to do so he was at once discharged. The person who is usually employed to act as interpreter at this Court was not present on the occasion, though another person who was competent to interpret was present. On the adjourned hearing of the case Connors was examined in English, and gave his evidence in that language without difficulty. I am not aware that any need exists for steps to be taken to protect Irish-speaking witnesses.

DISTRESS (BELMULLET UNION).

Mr. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to a resolution of the Belmullet Board of Guardians, in which it is declared that a large number of poor people from various localities, and especially from the Knocknalower dispensary district, have attended at the Belmullet Workhouse and informed the Board that unless they are relieved immediately they will have to become inmates of the workhouse; and if any report of this pressing and widespread distress has come to him from any official of the Irish Local Government Board; and, if not, will he direct an immediate inquiry to be made in Belmullet, so that, if necessary, instant steps may be taken to alleviate the distress there?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR : A copy of the resolution referred to has been received. The condition of the poorer classes in the Belmullet Union is receiving very careful consideration, and every endeavour is being made to prevent any one suffering from want. I may point out that there are at the present time fewer inmates of the Belmullet Workhouse than was the case last month, and considerably fewer than at the corresponding period of the previous year. As has been already stated, one of the members of the Local Government Board is now in the West of Ireland making special inquiries into the condition and prospects of the poorer classes, and the Government expect to receive a report from him in the course of a few days.

AUSTRALIAN AND INDIAN MAILS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether contracts for the conveyance of the Australian and Indian mails have been concluded; and, if so, when will they be laid upon the Table of the House; and whether the protests and requirements of the Australasian Governments on the subject will be laid upon the Table before Parliament is asked to confirm the contracts?

*Mr. HANBURY: Although the Postmaster General has recently, with the concurrence of India and the Colonies, accepted tenders for the conveyance of Indian and Australian mails, the contracts are not yet drawn. They will be laid upon the Table of the House as soon after signature as possible; but the correspondence on the subject is not of such a nature that the Government would think it necessary to lay it on the Table of the House.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Australian Governments had published the contracts?

*MR. HANBURY: I am not aware.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade will direct an inquiry into the circumstances connected with the loss of the Daunt's Rock lightship *Puffin*; what the age of this vessel was, and how long used as a lightship; whether the *Puffin* was as strongly constructed at the bows as modern lightships usually are; and whether it was the case that, when returning from Kingstown, the bows of the *Puffin* opened merely from old age?

MR. RITCHIE: An inquiry has been ordered as to the loss of the lightship *Puffin*. It is probable that that inquiry will have to be adjourned until the lightship can be raised. The necessary expenditure for this undertaking has been sanctioned, but the attempt will not be made in the present weather. The *Puffin* was built in 1887, and has been used as a lightship since that date. As no doubt the circumstances referred to in the two last paragraphs of the Question will be investigated at the inquiry, I must defer answering them until the report has been received.

MR. MAURICE HEALY, thanking the right hon. Gentleman for having ordered an inquiry, asked, was it intended that the inquiry should be adjourned as a matter of course until the ship was raised, or whether it would be in the discretion of the gentleman presiding at the inquiry to proceed to take such evidence as would be available in reference to the condition of the vessel before the raising of the vessel?

MR. RITCHIE did not think there would be any advantage in going into evidence until the ship was raised. Clearly the chief evidence would be the condition of the ship and crew; if meantime other evidence were proceeded with, it would probably have to be gone over again. Under any circumstances there could not be a report until the ship was raised, and he saw no valid reason for going on with the inquiry until the evidence could be completed.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can say what provision has been made for the parents, widows, and children respectively of the men lost by the foundering of the lightship *Puffin*, and, whether this provision will accrue from the date of the disaster?

MR. RITCHIE: I am afraid that I can only repeat to the hon. and gallant Member the reply that was given to him by my right hon. Friend on my behalf on the 21st instant, namely, that the Board are making inquiries as to the amount of pensions and gratuities which should be granted to the families of the men lost by the foundering of the lightship *Puffin*. As soon as a decision is arrived at, I shall be happy to communicate it to the hon. and gallant Member.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked whether, seeing that this disaster dated so far back as October last, and the delay was serious to those concerned, the right hon. Gentleman would use his influence for an early settlement?

MR. RITCHIE said he was urging forward the matter so far as he could. He had made a representation in that direction that day.

ARMY FOREIGN MEAT SUPPLY.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that certain contracts, containing the unrevised conditions as to the supply of foreign meat to the troops in Ireland, have been recently renewed; and, whether any steps will be taken to reduce the proportion of foreign meat at present permitted under the terms of these contracts?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The contracts for supplying the troops in Ireland with meat expired in December. They were therefore necessarily renewed; and until, as the result of the pending inquiry, it is seen whether or not any material change is practicable in the present system, that system remains in operation. These contracts will expire in June next.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked was it not the fact that contracts now in force permitted the supply of 40 per cent. of foreign meat to the troops in Ireland, and could not some immediate steps be taken to reduce that proportion?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he had stated several times what the proportion allowed was, and it was impossible to make any change in the system until the result of the inquiry was known.

TELEGRAPH FACILITIES (FAIRVIEW, COUNTY DUBLIN).

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why the Postmaster General has refused to comply with the request of the Town Commissioners of Clontarf, County Dublin, to establish a telegraphic office at Fairview, a place within that township, although the telegraph lines run in close proximity to the proposed office; whether he is aware that in the district of Fairview there is a population of about 3,000 which is at present wholly without telegraphic facilities; and whether, if so, and since no expense need be incurred in erecting a postal telegraph office at Fairview, he will now reconsider the subject, with a view to conceding the request made by the Clontarf Board?

*MR. HANBURY: The question of establishing a Telegraph Office at Fairview has only recently been considered, and the circumstances did not at that time appear to be such as to justify the extension. The Postmaster General will, however, cause a further inquiry on the subject to be made.

SLIGO ABBEY.

MR. B. COLLERY (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Local Government Board have made an order for closing the old Sligo Abbey as a place of interment; and, if such order is now in force, whether the attention of the Board of Works has been called to the decaying state of the Abbey; and, whether any steps have been taken under the Ancient Monuments Protection Acts (Ireland) to have those interesting ruins restored?

*MR. HANBURY: The Board understand that the closing order was issued by the Local Government Board early in 1895. The ruins, which are vested in the Board of Works, were repaired by the late Lord Mount-Temple, and in 1894 the inspector reported that no immediate works were necessary. Works that are considered desirable have been postponed owing to the condition of the graveyard, and they will be carried out gradually when the condition of the graveyard permits.

CURRENT RATE OF WAGES (WOOLWICH DISTRICT).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what has been the result of the Inquiry promised by him in the Debate of the 7th August to be undertaken by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade into the current rate of wages in the Woolwich district?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The pledge I gave on August 7th was that the Government would employ all official means at their command to ascertain the rate of wages current in the district for labour such as that employed by the State. I understand the War Office and the Board of Trade have been in communication on the subject, and any assistance the Board of Trade can give has been offered and will be given.

*SIR C. DILKE inquired if any statement was likely to be made on the subject, or would it be left to the Estimates?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I think it will be left to the Estimates, but I will communicate with my right hon. Friends.

LICENSING LAWS COMMISSION.

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has considered the numerous representations made on behalf of working men's clubs in reference to the composition of the Commission on the Licensing Laws;

and, whether, having regard to the completeness of the Inquiry, he will recommend the appointment, as an additional member of the Commission, of some suitable representative of the *bonâ fide* working men's clubs?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to read a short extract from a public letter I wrote on the subject to persons interested in the representation of clubs on this Commission. I stated, among other things, that while

"there is great objection to adding to the number of Commissioners after substantial progress has been made with the work of the Commission, I do not think the interest of those belonging to your association, or the much larger number of persons belonging to clubs throughout the country, will be in any way injured by leaving the composition of the Commission as it is. Many members of the Commission are interested in the successful management and working of these clubs, and I am sure the desire to do justice to this part of the Inquiry animates the chairman and all members of the Commission."

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY CONFERENCE.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether the Government intend to co-operate in any movement that may be made to hold a monetary international conference at an early date; and, whether, in such event, it will be arranged that a fair share of representation will be allotted to bi-metalists?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: There is no probability of the Government initiating such a movement, and manifestly it would be premature to discuss the composition of a conference not, so far as I know, yet proposed.

IMPOSITION OF FINES ON WORKMEN.

MR. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) asked the Home Secretary whether his attention had been called to the fact that firms in various parts of the country had published lists of fines to which their workpeople were to be liable, and whether in some cases these lists had been published without any explanation to the workpeople, and, if these facts were so, in what way was the Act of last Session operative?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: My attention has been called to cases mentioned by the hon. Member. Previous to the passing of the Act of last Session there was no legal protection to the workpeople against fines. The employer was free to impose fines arbitrarily, without notice and without any limit as to the amount. Now no fines can be imposed unless there has been a previous written or printed notice forming part of the contract of employment. The fines can be imposed only for acts which do damage to the employer, and they must be reasonable in amount. If any employer imposes a fine without notice, or if the fine imposed is unreasonably severe, he is liable to be convicted and punished, and has to make good the fine improperly imposed. More than this, the employer is liable to conviction if any fine named in the notice be excessive and persons work under it, even though no fine has actually been imposed. I have power in any case to exempt a trade from the Act, but if I do so in the cases where the fines are in dispute the only effect would be to enable the employer to impose these fines without any restriction whatever.

*MR. J. SAMUEL (Stockton) asked in what way the Act limited the imposition of fines. Was it not absolutely in the power of the employer by notice to say what should constitute the fines workmen should pay, and the workmen could only accept such notice?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I can only say the object of the Act was not to legalise any fines that were illegal before, but to define them and to render illegal those which were arbitrary or excessive, and to make clear to all concerned what was legal and what was not.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Friday, 12th March, till Wednesday, 24 March.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.—FIFTH DAY.]

Order Read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [22nd January] to Main Question [19th January], "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth:—

> "Most Gracious Sovereign,
>
> "We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—*(Viscount Folkestone.)*

And which Amendment was, at the end of the Question, to add the words:—

RELEASE OF DYNAMITARDS.

> "And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that, in our opinion, the explanation given by the Government to justify the release of the dynamitards is inadequate, and is calculated to encourage a recrudescence of that form of crime."—*(Sir Henry Howorth.)*

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added:—"Debate resumed—

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.), who expressed his surprise and regret that an hon. Member who was animated by so many humane sentiments and was free from so many of the prejudices of his political Party should have taken up an attitude on the exercise of the clemency of the Crown more in keeping with the spirit of an academic Judge Jeffreys than of an enlightened politician representing a great Lancashire constituency. It attacking the exercise of the clemency of the Crown by the Home Office, the hon. Member attacked what had become by custom a part of the Constitution. He protested emphatically against the Amendment and the Speech by which it was supported, because England alone among civilised nations did not differentiate between political prisioners and ordinary malefactors. But he would take a wider ground and refer to a wider feeling on this question. He asserted that there was in the popular mind of Great Britain and Ireland a conviction that the sentences inflicted in Courts of Justice invariably erred on the side of severity rather than on the side of leniency. He went also so far as to say there was a belief in the popular mind that the power vested in the Home Secretary of mitigating the too great severity of the law was a wise, just, and humane power, and he was convinced that until there was a Criminal Court of Revision and Appeal, the conviction would remain in the public mind that it would be wrong to interfere with the exercise of this humane power by the Home Secretary. ["Hear, hear!"] They had now in Ireland what was called an interesting new movement, and they found noble Members of another place following the practice of some of their ancestors and leading the Irish people in the direction of revolt against some phases of English rule. They had been told that it might be possible to have the episode of Boston repeated in Irish history—[*laughter*]—and that a no-tax agitation was possible in Ireland. If those principles were advocated and carried to their logical conclusion some of those noble lords might make the acquaintance of penal servitude. He would ask the hon. Member for Salford whether he could imagine, with peace to his mind, Lord Castletown condemned to be yoked to a cart in Dartmoor, drawing manure and coals and stones about, as he himself was when in that prison. Could he imagine Lord Mayo being condemned for six years to live in a semi-darkened cell, 7ft. long by 4½ft. wide, and not allowed to exchange a word with his fellow-prisoners? ["Hear, hear!"] He appealed to the hon. Member whether it was not wise even from a Unionist point of view to allow this dispensing power to remain intact in the hands of the Home Secretary, because it was possible that in future Tory Prime Ministers might arise more wise and more patriotic than Lord Salisbury, who might look in the direction of Salford for an ideal Home Secretary, and he was sure that in such a contingency the hon. Member would only be to too glad to mitigate the rigours of penal servitude in the instances to which he had referred. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] One could imagine, on hearing the speech of the hon. Member on Friday night, that such a thing as the curtailment of sentences by a Home Secretary was scarcely ever known until the right hon. Gentleman opposite was placed in that responsible position. But they knew that it was of almost constant occurrence, and that the Home Office had again and again to interfere, in response to popular feeling, by way of tempering justice with mercy. He believed he was right in saying that whilst the right hon. Member for Fife was Home Secretary he released two or three alleged dynamitards—and he hoped he released a large number of ordinary prisoners—on the ground that they had been sufficiently punished by the sentences already undergone. ["Hear, hear!"] Lord Llandaff, who, as Mr. Matthews, was a former Home Secretary, went so far as to reverse inside of a few hours—wisely and humanely—in the case of Mrs. Maybrick, the sentence passed by one of the highest Judges of the land, and he believed he also liberated several alleged dynamitards and political prisoners even before they had undergone more than half the terms served by the men who were released a short time ago by the present Home Secretary. ["Hear, hear!"] But worse than that remained to be told, for even amongst the elect there had been clemency agreed to in matters of this kind. The hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet was a member of Lord Beaconsfield's Administration in 1877. He was Chief Secretary in that Government, and he was bound to say the opinion prevailed in Ireland that the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to the best of his ability to do what he could for a country which he understood no more about than any other ordinary Englishman. [*Laughter.*] During that model Ministry six Fenian prisoners were released. Three of them had been tried by court-martial in the Army, one of whom had been sentenced to be shot and two to penal servitude for life. The civilians were dealt with by two of them being sentenced to penal servitude for life and one of them to 15 years'. These six men were all young men when they went to prison. There were only two of them now alive, and one of them was he who was then trespassing upon the indulgence and kindness of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] The Tory Party was not the only offender in this respect. He was, however, bound to say that, speaking for himself, he owed a debt of gratitude to the Tory Party, for he had been imprisoned three times by the Liberals and released twice by the Tories. [*Laughter.*] In 1870 Mr. Gladstone released some 20 or 25 political prisoners who had only undergone an average of about three-and-half years of their sentences, and yet juries had gone on convicting prisoners ever since, Judges had passed sentences, and the law had been administered without any infringement upon justice. ["Hear, hear!"] In fact, during the last thirty years he did not think there had been a Home Secretary who had made less use of the prerogative of the Crown in this respect than the Home Secretary who was now impeached by one of his colleagues below the gangway. ["Hear, hear!"] On this vital matter of the exercise of the power by the Home Office, he would quote some words that he was sure would be received with great respect by the House—words spoken on the 1st August, 1876, on a matter submitted to the House in his own behalf and others then in prison by Mr. O'Connor Power, who was then an ornament of debate in that House. The late Mr. John Bright, speaking on the occasion, used these memorable words, directly applicable to the issue raised by the hon. Member opposite in his Amendment:—

> "He regretted" (*The Times* report of the speech said) "that he had not on the previous occasion said what he had long thought with regard to what was called the Manchester outrage. There was one man shot dead and three persons were hanged for that murder. It had always appeared to him that the course taken by the Home Office on that occasion was a very unwise one. In a case of this kind to have hanged three men for one fatal shot was a mistake—a mistake according to the ordinary practice of our law, and a great mistake when looked at in its political aspect. He knew that it had been denied that this was strictly a political case or that the severity was resorted to because it was a political case. But he had always held the opinion that it was solely because it was a political case that three men were hanged for the murder of one man. The other day a trade outrage was committed near Bolton. A man was killed and three men were convicted, but they were convicted of manslaughter and not of murder, and unless the Manchester outrage was not viewed as a political offence, he could not see that it was different from the Bolton case he had described."

No one would assert that any statesman of our age had a greater regard for the integrity of justice and for the character of the Courts of Law than the orator who shed lustre on that House for so many years—John Bright. The hon. Member opposite, not content with trying to double-lock the door upon the Irish political prisoners still in goal, had attacked, in very bitter terms, those who had been released. The hon. Member said that reports were made by four doctors on four different occasions, that reports were also received from the regular medical officer of the gaol and the regular inspector, and that all these gentlemen testified that the prisoners were shamming madness. He would tell the hon. Member that "shamming" was invariably charged against prisoners who showed symptoms of insanity. He admitted that there were many among the baser criminal class who did pretend to be mad in the hope of obtaining release, but it was nevertheless true that there was no condition of life more calculated to engender mental disease than imprisonment. It could be shown from statistics how unfair and unjust the hon. Member had been in his strictures on the unfortunate men who had been liberated. The Protestant chaplain of Wandsworth Prison had recently published an article proving that whilst the annual ratio of insanity among the general population for 15 years was eight per 10,000, the ratio of insanity among prisoners was 226 per 10,000. Could it be thought singular that out of the 15 or 16 Irish political prisoners two or three should have shown symptoms of madness? When men had been subject to the rigours of penal servitude for 13 years it would be almost a miracle if none of them were to show signs of mental aberration. The hon. Member had commented upon the way in which one or two of the released men were received in Ireland, and he seemed to think that the presence of one of these gentlemen at a public meeting which he addressed pointed to demoralisation among the Irish people. Here was an example of the "unctuous rectitude"—[*cheers*]—to which reference had lately been made. Of course they had not all enjoyed the great advantage of being brought up under the moral influence of Salford and Manchester. [*Laughter.*] He would tell the hon. Member why the release of these political prisoners was acclaimed by the Irish people. Being a Celtic race the Irish had long memories, and they recollected that one of England's favourite practices in Ireland in the past was to employ the spy and the informer. The reason why Irish political prisoners were occasionally sent into that House was because Irishmen wished to protest against their country being ruled by gentlemen having the prejudiced views of the hon. Member for Salford. This alleged demoralisation in Ireland might be compared by the hon. Member with profit with something that occurred not many years ago in this centre of civilisation, and of moral, benevolent, and Christian progress in London itself. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] There was the trial, in 1857, of Dr. Bernard, who was accused of being an accomplice of Orsini's, and of making the bombs which were thrown in Paris and blew several innocent people into pieces. Although his guilt was manifest to everybody, Dr. Bernard was at once acquitted by a London jury, and *The Times* of the following morning declared that even if Bernard had been proved guilty, it was not the duty of Englishmen to judge French conspirators according to the rigid laws of English morality. ["Hear, hear!"] The jury were actually banqueted for their verdict by the citizens of London. The hon. Member had alluded to the courageous conduct of the late Home Secretary, describing it as "doubly courageous considering the pressure behind him." That being the statement of the hon. Member, he wished to ask the right hon. Member for East Fife whether the Irish Members had ever made any unfair proposal to him or suggested a deal or done anything of that kind.—[Mr. ASQUITH: "No, never!"]—If then in the case of the Home Secretary of a Government which the Nationalist Members held in power there was nothing of the sort it was monstrously absurd for the hon. Member to suggest that something of the kind might have occurred under a Unionist Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Then the hon. Member had called attention to abuse of the late Home Secretary in American papers, saying that in the last few years "Bloody Asquith" and "Ruffian Asquith" had been prominent headlines. But the attacks upon the right hon. Member had not been confined to American writers or Irish-American writers. Englishmen went to America occasionally and dabbled in journalism, and even in conspiracy—["hear, hear!"]—and whilst the late Home Secretary was in office an Englishman was attacking him openly in America, and suggesting at meetings of Irishmen that the right hon. Gentleman should be assassinated, and that the British Embassy in Washington should be broken up with dynamite. He warned the hon. Member for Salford to bear in mind in future that all that was written in American newspapers did not come from the honest enemies of the country. The right hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet on Friday made a very serious statement. He said that the Government were now apparently going to rely for support on the representatives of those who were called the bulk of the Irish people.—[Mr. JAMES LOWTHER: "I referred to things published in the recess. The statement was not mine."]—He understood the right hon. Member to say that the failure of justice at the Old Bailey in Ivory's case was associated with a general tendency of that kind. What did the right hon. Gentleman mean? Did he mean to insinuate that the Nationalist Members had entered into any compact with the Home Secretary with the object of defeating the ends of justice at the Old Bailey? He regretted that he could not discuss the question of the recent trial on that occasion, and trusted that before many days they would have an opportunity to throw some light upon it. ["Hear, hear!"] He asked the House to consider the spectacle presented to the world by what occurred in that Chamber on Friday last. The hon. Member for Salford's Amendment practically amounted to a vote of censure on the Government for releasing four or five men convicted of a political crime; yet on the same afternoon the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs answered a question put to him by an hon. Member of the Opposition, the reply being headed in *The Times* as "Political Prisoners in Turkey." From that reply one gathered that all prisoners in the Sultan's capital were being released; yet not many months ago a band of desperate men entered a bank in the middle of the day and flung down dynamite bombs among women and children in the streets of Constantinople. He held that the life of a woman or a child, be they Turks or Matabele, English or Irish, were of the same value. ["Hear, hear!"] They had here a Government, generally supported by the hon. Member opposite, compelling the Sultan to release these bomb-throwers at once, while the world saw the same Government doubling the bars of its prison doors against the release of four or five Irish political prisoners. [*Cheers.*]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool) whose rising was received with cheers, said: The hon. Member who has just sat down has made a very interesting speech to the House, but I trust he will not expect me to follow him into all the questions he has raised, and which I venture to think are not very germane to the immediate Amendment now before the House. I hope, however, it will be some satisfaction to my right hon. Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet, who spoke on Friday night, that he has succeeded at last in securing some compliments from an Irish representative. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Member has spoken about the general dispensing powers of the Home Office and the responsibility of the Secretary of State in advising the exercise of the prerogative of mercy. I apprehend that if I were to go into that subject in detail you, Sir, would rule me out of order; but I do desire to say—although, perhaps, it ought not to be said by one holding my position—that, delicate and difficult as are the duties of the office which I hold, I believe that the general exercise of that power, has in its results afforded satisfaction to the public sentiment. [*Cheers.*] I assure the House that in this matter there never has been from the beginning any compact between the Irish Member and myself or any member of the Government, any more than there was a compact with the right hon. Gentleman who preceded me in the Home Office. [*Cheers.*] I should have thought it hardly necessary to deny this [*cheers*] had it not been for the underlying feeling—I will not say for the express argument—of my hon. Friend who moved this Amendment, and for the observations of the right hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet, who had some leaning apparently that way. My right hon. Friend quoted certain words of mine, which he was perfectly justified in using, having a tendency to prove that I thought these particular prisoners were political prisoners. ["Hear,

hear!"] I have admitted, as those who have gone before me have admitted, that these men might be described as political prisoners in the sense that they were tried under the Treason Felony Act. This cannot be denied, and in a sense it is fair to believe that there were political motives which guided them towards the disastrous crimes which they unfortunately sought to commit. I have admitted it, but I expressly added in the same speeches that you must go beyond such motives. I said, as my predecessor said, that when you find men dealing with dynamite in the way in which these men were found guilty of dealing with it, they were guilty of crimes which, in the opinion of the civilised world, were atrocious, and against which society required the strongest protection of penal laws. But I strongly repudiate any special treatment of these prisoners. On the other hand, I would have no worse treatment. I have seen it inferred that because these prisoners had been guilty of these crimes, and because it was generally felt they ought to receive severe punishment, they were to be exempt from the ordinary rules of mercy with regard to health. I state most emphatically, without the slightest qualification or reserve, that in advising the exercise of the prerogative of mercy in the case of these four men last August I acted solely and entirely on medical grounds. [*Cheers.*] I have no *arrière pensée* whatever in the matter; I felt myself absolutely forced to come to the conclusion to which I came. I only regret that other circumstances, for which I blame no one, did not allow me to make this explanation more expressly before the country. As regards the question of there having been any special treatment, I have followed the course taken by the right hon. Gentleman opposite with regard to men who had been found guilty of these crimes—that they ought to be, and would be, subject to exactly the same rules as other prisoners sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. That is the rule on which I have proceeded, and that is the rule followed by those who have been my predecessors in office. There has been no idea whatever of taking into account the supposed existence of political motive or of dealing with these men either better or worse than we deal with other prisoners. My hon. Friend who proposed the Amendment quoted certain figures. He said that out of an average of 4,500 convicts in our prisons, five were released in 1894, and five in 1895, while last year, out of nine dynamite prisoners four were released. My hon. Friend drew an inference from those figures which was scarcely to be expected from a gentleman of his capacity. In the first place I should like to tell my hon. Friend that these Prison Department figures are not quite complete. The total number of men who have on medical grounds been released from convict prisons during the last four or five years was 16 in 1893, nine in 1894, 13 in 1895, and 20 in 1896 which includes the four men whose release is now under consideration. Secondly if you want to make a fair comparison as regards these releases between one year and another, I submit that my hon. Friend should make his comparison either between the one year's set of long sentence prisoners and the others, or between all the prisoners in the one year and all in the other, and he should not take out a certain number of prisoners who have been sentenced to long terms of penal servitude and whose cases may naturally call for the exercise of the special powers of the Crown, and compare the figures for those prisoners with the figures in another year for all prisoners indiscriminately. I come now to what I have substantially said before. In dealing with these prisoners I have pursued the general practice of the Home Office, a practice which has been in existence for many years, and in which I am sure I shall be corroborated by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite who have held this office. Shortly stated, that practice is this. When the Secretary of State is satisfied upon a medical certificate that continued imprisonment will endanger life or reason, he is justified, nay, he is called upon to exercise the prerogative of mercy. I do not speak of other conditions which must of course attach to the question of release, because they are not absolutely necessary for the purpose of my argument; but I say that this is a perfectly sound proposition, and I am surprised to hear that a contrary belief should be entertained. I am confident it is the general belief of the country and of this House that when a long sentence of penal servitude is inflicted it is not intended to be a sentence of death, or a sentence which should commit a man to the lunatic asylum. [*Cheers.*] What is the duty of the Home Office? I submit it is the duty of the Home Office to satisfy itself by the best means it can command—which of course are its own medical officers, and when necessary medical men of great position who are not connected with the Home Office or with the prison service—if prisoners are reported to be in a dangerous condition that such is indeed the case, and when it is so certified, it is the duty of the Secretary of State to act. I think my hon. Friend who moved the Amendment questioned me as to the practice with regard to approaching insanity. I assert what is very well known to my predecessors, that although under the law as affecting our convict prisons special precautions are not required to be taken by means of medical reports as to insanity that may come on, yet in the Local Prisons Acts this point is specially mentioned. It has been for years past the practice of the Home Office—and I believe the humane and proper practice—to satisfy itself as to the probable effects of continued imprisonment, and to take care that if reason or life are likely to be endangered, steps should be taken to restore the prisoner to his friends. If that proposition be established—and I venture to think it is not an unduly merciful view of the administration of our prison system—then I say that the action I took with regard to these four men is amply justified. The right hon. Gentleman who preceded me at the Home Office, in speaking of this matter in Scotland in the autumn, was good enough to acknowledge that he fully accepted my assertion that I had been guided solely by medical considerations. I thank him for accepting that statement from me, and I wish that others in this House had accepted it with equal frankness. My right hon. Friend said in the same speech that when he left Office in June, 1895, the condition of these particular men was not such as to call for any intervention on the part of the Home Office. I have had, of course, opportunity of seeing all the information which reached my right hon. Friend, and I say most unhesitatingly that it amply proves he was perfectly right in the action he took. [*Cheers.*] What took place subsequently? About December of the same year, having had, as was most natural, representations from the friends of the men, and being anxious to obtain the highest and best medical authority as to their health in view of further Parliamentary inquiries and discussion, I ordered a special inquiry. I secured the services of Dr. Maudsley and Dr. Nicholson, and when we met Parliament in the spring of 1896 I was able to say that all the facts before me amply endorsed what had been represented previously to my right hon. Friend, and that on medical grounds there was no case whatever for advising the clemency of the Crown. In the course of last summer, as a consequence of representations which I received from the friends of one of these prisoners—Daly—and in consequence of a report which I immediately called for from the prison doctor, I thought it necessary to order a fresh inquiry. I was able then to get a report from Dr. Gover, who was the medical inspector under the Prison Commission, a gentleman of 40 years' experience, who knows more of prisoners in our gaols and their habits and customs than any medical man in England, and who has had the greatest experience of malingering and shamming. I received a report from him in the month of July, and in that report he strongly recommended the release within a month of Daly and the other prisoners, but I speak now especially of Daly. Dr. Gover said Daly was unable to bear further imprisonment. He expressed the strongest opinion that he ought to be released within a month. I do not hesitate to say that if I had been dealing with the case of an ordinary long sentence prisoner who had been 13 or 14 years in penal servitude, upon that report I should have asked for no further advice. [*Cheers.*] But such has been the public notice called to these cases, and such has been the strong advocacy on the one side and the strong feeling on the other, that I thought myself justified—nay obliged to ask for an opinion independent of the Home Office. I accordingly immediately sent down two doctors, one of whom had seen

Daly and the other prisoners in the previous December, Drs. Maudsley and Buzzard, and they, with the opinion of Dr. Gover before them, corroborated it. That corroboration extended not only to the case of Daly, about whom I imagine there has been some feeling of doubt, but it extended to the case of the other three prisoners. What, therefore, was my position? About August 1, when this question was raised upon the Estimates, I stated that I had just received a Report—the Report to which I have just alluded—and that it called for my very serious consideration, and I hinted that in all probability I should feel obliged, in accordance with the practice of the Home Office, to advise the clemency of the Crown with reference to certain prisoners whose names were contained in that Report. Of course, I was aware—nobody in my position could help being aware—of what would be said. It would be said, as it has been said "Oh, this is part of some arrangement." Even at the risk of such an imputation as that, I deemed it my duty to act. [*Cheers.*] Of course, I might have delayed my action and kept these men longer in prison, gradually letting them out, the worst cases first, in order that it might be done quietly and without public notice. I thought the most straightforward course was to inform the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*] Accordingly, on the earliest day after I had formed my opinion, I came down and stated it to the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*] My only regret is that, owing to the shortness of the period during which Parliament sat, there was not time for questions to be put or further explanations to be made. That is really the whole case. As regards these particular prisoners, my right hon. Friend the Member for Thanet said that I had no business to turn dangerous lunatics out into the world—["hear, hear!"]—and he quoted the unfortunate cases of Gallagher and Whitehead. I wish to state most emphatically that, according to the opinions I had before me, these men at the time of their release were not mad. The opinion of Dr. Gover, corroborated by Drs. Buzzard and Maudsley, was that they feared continued imprisonment upon men of that excitable temperament and somewhat weak intellect would produce insanity, and therefore I arranged that the men should be discharged and taken away to their friends in the hope of recovery. Discharge, unfortunately, acted upon them in a contrary direction. Gallagher and Whitehead both went out of their mind, and I regret to say are at present in a lunatic asylum. But at the time of their release they were not fit subjects for Broadmoor, and could not have been sent there. I believe there is no one in this House, not even the hon. Gentleman who has attacked the clemency of the Home Office, who wishes that long-continued imprisonment should end in lunacy. [*Cheers.*] Unfortunately, all penal discipline has to be arranged to meet the cases of the worst characters, but there are differences of temperament and constitution, both physical and mental, and it must occasionally happen that the course of a sentence of long imprisonment operates in one way upon one prisoner and more disastrously upon another. It is for that reason that anybody in my position has to do his best to act upon the best medical opinions he can procure. It is a very delicate and difficult duty for any medical gentleman to undertake. It is very difficult indeed for him to ascertain what will really be the effect of imprisonment if continued. It is very difficult for him to say whether a certain condition of mind or body may not arise from constitution and be contained within the man and not be due to his punishment. While I do not for a moment mean to say that any of my medical advisers have been at fault in this matter, I do say that, if there has been any mistake, it is only natural that in circumstances of such great difficulty there should be from time to time the apparent result of one man being let out too late and another too soon. I go back to what I began with. The only thing that has been special in the treatment of these prisoners is that in consequence of the frequent attention which has been called to them in Parliament, in consequence of the great feeling in Ireland, and in consequence of the general desire on the part of every Member of the House to know whether the allegations made were true or not, more care was taken in getting special medical opinions with regard to them than is the case with ordinary convicts. I do not think I am to be blamed for that. [*Cheers.*] I shall be very much surprised if even my hon. Friend who moved this Amendment thinks after my explanation that I had any other course open to me last August—[*cheers*]—than to follow the general practice of the Home Office—I believe a thoroughly sound, useful, and valuable practice in the interests of common justice even more than of mercy—that practice being to see that continued imprisonment does not permanently endanger life or reason. [*Cheers.*] Notwithstanding the somewhat personal observations of the hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment I will say no more, for those observations have been answered sufficiently by my right hon. Friend. [*Cheers and laughter.*] I am glad to have had an opportunity of explaining my position to the House fully and frankly. [*Cheers.*]

MR. H. H. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): Although I think it will be almost universally regretted that the hon. Member for Salford should have seen fit to introduce an Amendment worded like this, on grounds so slender—[*cheers*]—yet I cannot think that the Home Secretary will look upon it altogether as a matter for regret, seeing that it has afforded him, in the speech which he has just delivered, an opportunity of vindicating his conduct in a manner so plain, straightforward, and unanswerable that it is unlikely we shall hear any more of the injurious and, I must say, the reckless suspicion—[*cheers*]—which from time to time during the past few months have been bruited abroad. For my part—and in this particular matter I think I speak the sense of every man on this side of the House—I never for a moment believed that there was, or that there could conceivably be, any of those suggested compacts or secret arrangements between the Government and a section of their political opponents which the imagination, not of Liberal speakers, but of too-zealous supporters of Her Majesty's Government, has conjured into existence. [*Cheers.*] It is a suspicion dishonouring to the manliness of our public men; and it is a suspicion which, in this particular case, was transparently ridiculous, because, in the present condition of parties, I do not know that my hon. Friends below the gangway have anything to offer which, even if the Government had had the disposition to enter into a corrupt bargain, it would have been worth the while of the Government to accept. [*Laughter and cheers.*] That aspect of the case may be once and for all left out of view; and all I wish to say now is with reference to the general question and the application to this particular case of the rules which ought to govern the action of the Home Office in the dispensation of the prerogative of mercy. As regards these particular prisoners, there has been, as the right hon. Gentleman said, an absolute continuity of treatment in the Home Office from the time they were first imprisoned to the present moment. ["Hear, hear!"] It has been suggested that during the time we held office some exceptional severity of treatment was shown to them by myself or by those for whom I was responsible. There is not a shadow of foundation for that statement. [*Cheers.*] These prisoners were treated while I was at the Home Office exactly in the same way—neither better nor worse—as all the other inmates of our convict prisons. I myself released six of them during my term of office, and four of those six upon precisely the same grounds as those on which the right hon. Gentleman has acted in the present case—namely, having medical reports submitted to me which showed that continued imprisonment would be dangerous to the prisoners. ["Hear, hear!"] I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for making out so clearly—and I accept his statement of the matter—that not only at the time I left office, but for nearly six months afterwards, the most careful medical inquiry from absolutely impartial and independent sources confirmed the conclusions of the medical advisers whom I consulted—that it was not possible, consistently with the rules which govern the Home Office in these matters, however strongly I might have been and was inclined to do it if I could, to advise the exercise of the prerogative of mercy. [*Cheers.*] I must say that in matters of this kind, and I do not care who holds the office, as regards the exercise of this prerogative of mercy, a more responsible and thankless task cannot possibly be cast on the shoulders of any man. ["Hear, hear!"] Whoever he is, he is bound to be governed by the best medical opinion he can obtain. If he can be shown not to have directed an adequate medical inquiry into cases even of suspected illness, and much more of suspected insanity, then he is shown to have been guilty of a gross dereliction of a primary duty. ["Hear, hear!"] But so long as he does what we have always done, not periodically but constantly—kept these prisoners under the supervision of the most competent medical men—and so long as these advisers have reported that there is no sufficient ground for letting the prisoners free, then he is bound to keep them where they are. But directly the medical advisers report that continued imprisonment would be dangerous to life or reason, the Home Secretary is equally bound not to delay a moment in setting the particular prisoners free. ["Hear, hear!"] Those are the rules, not of policy, but of humanity and common sense, which have guided and which continue to guide the Home Office. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for Salford, in his general attack upon the exercise of the prerogative of mercy by which he prefaced his speech, compared the secret procedure of the Home Office in these matters to the operations of the Star Chamber. The Star Chamber proceeded by secret and tortuous methods to punish people who had been guilty of no legal offence. But in the dispensation of the prerogative of mercy, as governed by rule, the Home Office proceeds in the opposite direction, and proceeds to deal with persons found guilty of a legal offence in such a spirit of humanity and mercy as will reduce excessive punishments and liberate men who have unfortunately been reduced by imprisonment to a condition of body or mind where continued detention would be inhuman. [*Cheers.*] Those are the principles on which the Home Office has always proceeded, and I am certain that they will meet with the unanimous approval of the House. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that both the right hon. Gentleman and the Home Secretary seemed to accept the principle that in regard to all political prisoners the prerogative of mercy must only be exercised on medical grounds. That was a principle to which he could not for a moment agree—[*Nationalist cheers*]—and it was not the principle on which the Home Office had acted. So recently as the case of Egan a prisoner was released by the right hon. Member for Fife, not on medical grounds, but because it was thought that there were doubts as to the prisoner's guilt.

Mr. ASQUITH: I released Egan because I thought that he had been sufficiently punished.

Mr. DILLON said that, at any rate, it was not on medical grounds. On more than one occasion the Home Office had released large numbers of Irish political prisoners from motives of public policy, and it would be a monstrous thing that the Home Secretary should regard the suggestion that he might release political prisoners on grounds of public policy as a slur on his honour.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I never said anything about my personal honour. I simply stated the true reasons which had induced me to release these men.

Mr. DILLON contended that if it should appear to the Government that the release of prisoners would allay public irritation and conciliate large sections of public opinion, without encouraging crime, the Government were amply justified in releasing those prisoners on that ground alone.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall), who was received with cries of "Divide," said he was sure the House had listened with pleasure to the Home Secretary's complete vindication of his conduct. But that pleasure would be mingled with regret that that explanation had not been given on Friday instead of being delayed till Monday. After hearing the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, he did not expect to hear such a complete vindication from the Home Secretary; because the speech of the First Lord seemed to be cast on the old rule, "When you have no case, abuse the plaintiff." [*Loud cries of* "The attorney," *and laughter.*] He had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Salford and had read it three or four times; but he had failed to find any of the attacks or insinuations for which his hon. Friend was so severely trounced by the Leader of the House. [*Laughter.*] Some phrases, perhaps, were not happy, but his hon. Friend had had to speak amid the continual interruptions of a certain section of the House. But his hon. Friend had carefully guarded himself over and over again from any imputation against the Home Secretary's personal honour. His hon. Friend distinctly declared that it was only the right hon. Gentleman's judgment and discretion which he called in question. A more straightforward speech he had never read. [*Ironical cheers and cries of* "Divide!"] The Home Secretary would surely admit that any Member had a right to call his discretion in question, especially when it had previously been done all over the country. The affair did look ugly, though the right hon. Gentleman had shown that he had acted in the most admirable manner. As to any bargain with the Irish Members, such a thought ought not to have entered anyone's head. Not only had the Irish Members nothing to sell, but, as the question had been raised in connection with the Land Bill, the Government had every inducement to keep the prisoners in gaol, for it was their own supporters, and not the Irish Members, whom they had an interest in conciliating over the Land Bill. He wished to vindicate the position of the hon. Member for Salford. [*Laughter.*] Disagreeable as it must be to question the discretion of one's leaders—[*ironical cheers and laughter*]—private Members had a right to do so, without being trounced in the very severe way in which the Leader of the House had trounced the hon. Member for Salford. [*Ironical cheers and laughter.*] The supporters of the right hon. Gentleman followed his lead with great pleasure; but he did not call the manner of the right hon. Gentleman leading; he called it driving. [*Ironical cheers and laughter.*] He protested against any attempt to limit the private Members' liberty of criticism.

Sir HENRY HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said that he had given notice in the proper quarters that he should not press this Amendment to a Division. [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"] His object had been to state on the floor of the House what he had stated elsewhere in the autumn. He thought it was his duty to do that; and he thought that he had done it without imputing dishonourable motives to anybody. He thought he had stated his case with some temperateness, and he thought it a case of sufficient gravity to bring before the House in the form of an Amendment to the Address. His desire was to afford an opportunity to the Home Secretary to make a statement such as the right hon. Gentleman made that day, which he had had no opportunity of making during the last Session of Parliament; and which he had not made anywhere until now. Having attained that object he begged leave to withdraw the Amendment. [*Irish cries of* "No."]

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is the pleasure of the House that the Amendment should be withdrawn? [*Loud cries of* "No, no!" *from the Irish Benches.*]

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.), who was received with cheers, said they should not have opposed the withdrawal of the Amendment if there had fallen from the hon. Member for Salford one single word of regret for having moved it. That Amendment was not merely an offence to the Government, but it was an offence to the 80 Irish Nationalist Members of the House. [*Irish cheers.*] He should like to point out that the hon. Member, who now stated he only wished to give the Government an opportunity for explanation, began his speech on Friday night by sneering at the Maamtrasna Alliance. Why did the hon. Member resurrect the Maamtrasna Alliance? Why did he suggest that there was some complacency on the part of the Nationalist Members because of the Land Act of last Session. If there was one section of the Conservative Party which more than another had reason to be disaffected to the Government because of that Land Act it was the Irish landlord and Orange Party. But to the credit of those Gentlemen be it said that, smarting though they were under the passage of a Measure which had further reduced their rents, there had not fallen from any one of them a single word of condemnation of this act of clemency and mercy. [*Cheers.*] The complaint had come entirely from men of English race, English feeling, and English thought—men who had received more favours, in honours and emoluments, from the Government than the whole Irish Unionist Party put together. [*Renewed cheers.*] He had always been proud of being an Irishman; but he felt prouder than ever of the distinction that night when he found that the Irish landlords and the Irish Orangemen on the benches opposite, although smarting under the Land Act of last year and although the policy of dynamite would have had a serious effect on their fortunes, had not joined in the miserable opposition to this bare act of justice to a handful of unfortunate men who for many a long and weary year had been pining out their lives in the agony of penal servitude. [*Cheers.*] The opposition had come instead from that distinguished geologist — [*cries of* "Order" *and Irish cheers*]—who had already received many favours from the Government, and who, perhaps, had good right to feel annoyance now that there was no longer any hope of expecting more. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

Question put, and negatived.

FOOD PRODUCTS.

*MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport) proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words,—

> And we humbly represent to Your Majesty our regret that Your Majesty's Advisers have expressed no intention of promoting legislation in furtherance of the report of the Select Committee on Food Products, which disclosed the existence of unfair and nefarious competition with Native food producers by Foreigners and others, to the great detriment both of the commercial and agricultural interest of the people of the United Kingdom.

He thought his Amendment deserved the support of all classes of the House. There could be no difference of opinion as to the importance of the subject, especially when it was considered that our policy of Free Trade had opened our ports to the whole world. No doubt consumers had benefited more by that policy than any other class of the community, for it had had the effect of reducing the prices and extending the varieties of commodities. The general trade of the country had also been served materially by Free Trade. In fact there was probably only one class who failed to appreciate that policy, and those were the agriculturists, who have had to bear the brunt of the burden of Free Trade. But, notwithstanding that, the farmer had never expressed his inability to hold his own provided the competition of the foreigner was only fair. His Amendment dealt with the competition that was unfair and nefarious. He did not think it would be contended by the Government that this question had been suddenly sprung upon them, because the urgency of legislation in the matter had been frequently urged upon them and their predecessors in office during the last four years. Bodies representing the agricultural, commercial, and consuming interests of the country had again and again made representations to the Government that further legislation was necessary to prevent the evils of adulteration from continuing. The Chambers of Commerce had been very active in the matter. The Central Chamber of Agriculture, and innumerable agricultural associations in England, Scotland, and Ireland had taken part in the movement. The public analysts of the country, whose experience of the administration of the existing laws to prevent adulteration was, of course, most extensive, had also been persistent in their efforts to obtain some amendment of the present unsatisfactory Food and Drugs Act. The outcome of the agitation was the appointment of a Select Committee in 1894, which was reappointed in 1895, and continued to take evidence until July, 1896, when they submitted a unanimous Report to the House. The Report set out that a considerable portion of the imports of the country were adulterated, that adulteration of food was largely practised throughout the country, and that the laws dealing with food adulteration needed amendment. There was, therefore, no reason why legislation on this most important question should be delayed. It was not a Party question; and the Government had nothing to apprehend in the way of Party opposition should they undertake to legislate on the subject. Consequently it was with considerable surprise that the supporters of this movement against food adulteration found no reference to the question in the Queen's Speech, although there was a promise to introduce a Bill to improve the Water Supply of the Metropolis. He was sure that if the Government had studied the Report of the Food Products Committee they would have thought that the purity of the food supply of the Metropolis was far more urgent than even the question of water. It could not be satisfactory to learn that adulteration was increasing. Samples taken of all kinds of articles showed that the percentage of adulteration in 1888 was 10.8, while in 1893 it had increased to 12.9, and in London it was 17.1 per cent. The articles most adulterated were, of course, milk and butter. The returns supplied to the Committee showed that over 25 per cent. of the milk sold in the metropolis was adulterated, and it was estimated that Londoners paid annually for water sold under the guise of milk no less a sum than a million and a-half sterling. Butter was found to be adulterated in the Metropolis to the extent of 20 per cent. In the country, according to the Local Government Board Return, the amount of the adulteration of these two articles was somewhat smaller, but Mr. Lloyd, the consulting chemist and analyst to the British Dairy Farmers' Association, informed the Committee that during the past twelve years in his official capacity he had made analyses of thousands of samples of milk taken throughout the whole country, and this record showed that the average proportion of adulterated milk was 24.8 per cent. These figures were very serious indeed, especially as the largest quantity of milk was always consumed by the youngest portion of the population. But they in no sense disclosed the full gravity of the case, because there was abundant evidence to show that many of the local authorities failed to make use of the Acts, so that they had become practically a dead letter. He urged that the administration of the Acts by the local authorities should be made compulsory instead of permissive. The effect of the permissive character of the Acts was that in 45 country districts, with an aggregate population of three millions, only one sample for every 5,730 persons was taken during the year 1893. It was proved by the Local Government Board Return that in 50 towns, with populations ranging from 60,000 to 135,000, not a single sample of butter was submitted to analysis by the local authorities. In 16 municipal boroughs, including Northampton, Colchester and Dover, not a single sample of any kind whatever was taken at the instance of the local authority in 1893. In Sunderland too, where the Acts were disregarded, the local authority considered they were adequately remunerating the borough analyst by giving him a salary of £5 a year. The amount of adulteration was proved to be in direct ratio to the manner in which the Acts were administered. In Birmingham milk was adulterated to the extent of 19 per cent., in Liverpool 18 per cent., in Manchester 5 per cent., and in Salford 3 per cent. The results in Manchester and Salford were due to good administration of the Acts, and nothing else. The same thing was seen in the Metropolis, where in Marylebone the adulteration found in samples taken was only 6 per cent., while in the adjoining parish of St. Pancras it was 43 per cent. So flagrant was this neglect that it had become necessary for private associations to band themselves together into Vigilant Committees in order to carry out the Acts. He hoped the Government would pass in due course a Consolidated Adulteration Act. Where it was ascertained that falsified food products were coming into this country steps should be taken to prevent them being circulated, they should be seized, and, if necessary, confiscated. The Government had done something in the way of taking samples at the port of entry, for example, 100 samples of shipments coming from Germany were tested, and no less than 30 were found to be falsified. Of 147 samples taken of consignments from Holland no less than 62 were found to be adulterated. But the Government did not seize these goods, and he understood, from an answer given him by the President of the Board of Agriculture last year, that the reason was that the Law Officers of the Crown advised him that a seizure could not be made until the adulterated article was sold, as until then no offence was committed. With a view of testing the validity of this opinion the Committee heard the evidence of Mr. Follett, who admitted that goods to which a false trade description was applied could be seized and confiscated, and that to apply to any goods a description as to their composition not in accordance with the facts was an offence against the Merchandise Marks Act. When asked, however, why adulterated butter to which a false description had been applied had not been seized, he revealed, to their surprise, that under the existing law the shipper had the right within 21 days after the arrival of a shipment to amend the description on the Bill of Entry, thus putting a premium on deceit and fraud. The Government should take steps to remedy such an anomaly, which a three-line Bill would sweep away. Much inconvenience was caused to traders by the great uncertainty that existed in the laws as to adulteration. Conflicting judgments were frequently given as to the use of "preservatives." Some magistrates held that putting preservatives in food products was an offence; others that it was not. In Birmingham there had been a a great many prosecutions of traders for using preservatives, but the City Council there had discontinued their action in the expectation of legislation by the House. Traders in the country were naturally much harassed by the uncertainty of the law, and trade in consequence was much unsettled. With regard to the standard of purity of food, the Committee recommended the establishment of a Court of Reference, which should decide what constituted a standard of purity in various articles. He hoped legislation would be introduced establishing such a Court. The question was urgent, and ought not to be indefinitely delayed. The present law was insufficient to deal with the matter, and further legislation was necessary. There was practical unanimity on the subject if the Government would introduce a Bill, and points on which there was any difference could be settled in a few days.

Mr. ARTHUR JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) seconded the Amendment, because he thought some amendment of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act was necessary, not only in the interests of purchasers of agricultural but of other kinds of produce. It was not a Party question. The committee were appointed two and a-half years ago by the late Government. The hon. Member for Ilkeston (Sir W. Foster) was the first Chairman, and when the work became too arduous, and the long sittings almost wore him out, they appointed as Chairman the Under Secretary of the Local Government Board, to whom, at the end of the two and a-half years, they passed a unanimous vote of thanks. It was a most important subject, because so many agricultural products were adulterated, and thereby the farmers were undersold. Almost every county had an analyst, who was supposed to analyse samples of food, but the system was so lax that a great many cases of adulteration escaped notice altogether. In one county only 24 samples of milk were taken in a whole year. In other countries even fewer had been taken. It was similar with butter. Frequently when articles were analysed, and a conviction was obtained, appeal was made to Somerset House whether the article was adulterated or not, and the Somerset House analyst was at variance with the opinion of the county analyst. The Board of Reference proposed would give its decision in such differences. The Committee found the adulteration of milk a difficult matter to decide upon. It was difficult to decide whether milk should have 3 per cent. of fat in it or not. Some analyst said good milk ought to have more per cent. of solids; others said it was pure milk if it had 2 or 2½ per cent. If it were proved that milk had come straight from the cow he should be satisfied. The Board of Reference would deal with this matter, too. An immense amount of butter mixed with margarine was sold as pure butter. It came chiefly from abroad, and was difficult to detect. The Committee on Food Products recommended that, for the protection of the public, there should be a law that margarine should not be coloured and passed off as butter. If sold in its natural colour—white—the public would know it when they saw it. Legislation on the subject would be hailed with the greatest pleasure, not only by the commercial but by the agricultural community. The Central Chamber of Agriculture, at its last meeting, unanimously passed a resolution asking the Government to introduce legislation and take away from agriculturists the severe burden they had at present to bear of having to compete with foreigners who sent so many adulterated products into this country. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said that, important as this subject might be to England, it was of even greater importance to Ireland, which was an agricultural country, depending exclusively on agriculture. The almost profligate neglect of the interests of Ireland as regarded the adulteration of food was a flagrant instance of the inability of the House to legislate properly for Ireland. The aspect of the subject which particularly interested them in the South of Ireland was the adulteration of butter. The Cork Butter Market was probably the greatest institution of the kind in the world. It was much more important formerly, but even now there was no other butter market in the world of equal magnitude, and probably there was no city in the world in which the butter trade was of so much commercial importance. The butter trade in Cork had practically been paralysed by the adulteration that went on, and the existing state of the law. What he would explain to the House was that the Trustees of the Cork Butter Market had for the past two years been in a state of the utmost perplexity and embarrassment owing to the failure of that House to deal with the question raised in the Food Products Committee Report. Here again Ireland, as in so many other matters, was unfortunately differentiated against. The districts in England where the Food Adulteration Acts were put into force were the very districts where Irish butter was sold. The hon. Member for Devonport had referred to the special degree of activity with which the Manchester and Salford Corporations had put those Acts into force. So far from blaming those local authorities, he thought their activity in this matter was greatly to their credit. But he did call attention to the fact that it was in these very districts of Manchester and Salford, and in other parts of Lancashire, that the Cork butter trade found its principal market, and therefore it was the Irish butter trade that was differentiated against. In the districts where Irish butter was most largely consumed they had the local authorities prosecuting time after time, while in other districts of England, where Irish butter was not so largely consumed, there was utter neglect on the part of the local authorities to put the Adulteration Acts into force. The principle thing in connection with the Irish butter trade had arisen not on the point of adulteration as it was ordinarily understood, but on the question of water in butter. There had been the greatest difference of opinion even amongst experts on this question, and there had unfortunately been the greatest difference of practice on the part of the Courts who had had to consider the question. In Ireland there had been numerous prosecutions, and owing to the difference of the practice in the Courts of England and Ireland, the unfortunate exporters of Irish butter had been reduced to their wits' end to know what they should do. The matter had grown so acute that within the past month or two the Trustees of the Cork Butter Market had contemplated approaching the Chief Secretary for Ireland with a view of solving the difficulty in which they were involved. The difficulty arose in this way. The English magistrates took their views of butter adulteration from Somerset House, and at Somerset House they had arrived at a standard which he did not quarrel with, but under which an excess in the proportion of water in butter was sternly and stringently punished. In consequence of the action of the Salford authorities the parties interested in the Irish butter trade thought it would be a good thing to get the law put into force in the same way in Ireland as in England, and that they should go to the seat of the mischief and prosecute the farmer who sold the butter to the merchant. But when they did that in Ireland they found that a wholly different class of evidence was given before the magistrates, and that whereas in England the man who sold the butter was certain to be convicted, in Ireland there was no similar practice at all, and that it depended on the whim, as he might call it, of the particular magistrate or County Court Judge whether or not he would put into force in Ireland the law which was stringently enforced in England. That was the difficulty. If there was a law prescribing a standard, and enacting that a certain percentage of water should be illegal, then it would be a simple matter. He did not know whether that was possible or not, for he dared say there was something to be said on both sides of the question. If they had the control of their own affairs in Ireland this was a question on which they would have been able to legislate, and on which they would have legislated. It was a subject of great complaint that in a matter so vital to Irish agriculturists as the butter trade, that House did not set itself in motion to end the deadlock which had arisen in the Irish butter trade. It had now come to this, that no Manchester merchant would buy butter from the Cork market without getting a guarantee from the exporter. On the other hand the exporter had no means whatever of getting a corresponding guarantee from the merchant who sold to him, while the merchant had no means of getting a guarantee from the farmer. The matter was one urgently calling for legislation in some direction so as to settle the question. He asked that some legislative conclusion should be given to the Report of the Food Products Committee, and that something should be done by that House to save the Irish butter trade from practical extinction. In Ireland they suffered the keenest competition from Denmark, Sweden, Normandy, and France. Did any one of the Legislatures of those countries neglect the interest of the butter manufacturers as this Parliament neglected the interest of the butter producers in Ireland? No. The butter trade from Norway, at any rate, had been largely created by the fostering hand of the Legislature. Similarly there was the minutest legislation on the question in France to protect and promote the trade in butter. It was owing to this that Normandy and Danish butter was able to-day to compete not merely in England but in Ireland itself with Irish butter. Ireland was differentiated against, too, by the neglect of the Customs Authorities in England. Another grievance in this matter was the question of margarine. If the Irish butter producer adulterated his butter with margarine or any produce of that kind he was speedily prosecuted and punished, but the manufacturer of margarine in Holland had free access to the markets of this country, the Customs Authorities all over England having over and over again refused to enforce the law against him. This Government had professed itself to be the protector of agriculture. If they really had the interests of agriculture at heart, then, both in England and Ireland they would be well advised in devoting themselves to the Report of this Committee on Food Products, and in endeavouring to do for English and Irish agriculturists what foreign Governments had done for the agriculturists of their countries. The Irish agriculturists were placed in serious competition with foreign producers in the English markets, and, therefore, the Government were bound to induce Parliament to devote a portion of its time to the consideration of this important subject. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) said that all sides of the House must look forward with interest to the statement which would be made on this question by the hon. Member for S. Tyrone, the Under Secretary of the Local Government Board, who had discharged with so much ability the duties of Chairman of this important Committee. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman could scarcely fail to express his appreciation of the recommendations of the Committee, which in all probability he himself drew up and assented to. His only fear was lest the hon. Gentleman, in making his announcement, should minimise the importance and the difficulties of the question. One of the greatest difficulties they had to encounter was to fix a standard of purity in regard to food products. The traders maintained that a certain amount of adulteration was necessary to render their products saleable, but the correctness of the assertion was questioned by many witnesses of experience who gave evidence before the Committee. The Committee, when they came to consider their Report and to draw up their recommendations, designedly omitted to refer to this contentious matter. The Committee appeared to be of opinion that it was not so much the provisions of the Adulteration Acts that were in fault, so much as the machinery for enforcing them and putting them into operation. It could not be doubted that the failure of the Adulteration Acts was due to their defective machinery. That the Acts had failed in carrying out their object was proved by the fact that they were rarely enforced. The recommendations of the Committee were 23 in number, and with one exception they all referred to the improvement of the machinery of the Acts. The first recommendation of the Committee was that the provisions of the Acts should be enforced by the local authorities, and the others also referred to the improvement in the machinery of the Acts. He expected that his hon. Friend the Secretary of the Local Government Board would lay some stress upon the nineteenth recommendation of the Committee, which related to the establishment of a standard of purity. The recommendation of the Committee upon the point was carefully and designedly drawn up in a somewhat vague manner. In his view it frequently happened that small Measures, such as that which the Government were asked to introduce upon this subject, were of more benefit to the community than large Measures that involved the fate of Ministries. Although the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment might not have authority to pledge his Party on the subject, yet he could not doubt that the fact of his having raised this question would have some influence, and he believed a Bill on the subject, if introduced by the Government and framed on the recommendations of the Committee, would receive the most careful consideration from all sides of the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.) said that he was not in the least degree disposed to minimise the importance of this question, because no one could have sat upon the Committee which had been referred to without being impressed by the deep interest which was taken in the subject by large sections of the community, and he could assure hon. Members that he had deemed it his duty to draw the serious attention of the Government to this matter. ["Hear, hear!"] The real question before the House, however, was not whether legislation on this subject ought to take place, but whether or not it should take place at once. The Select Committee in question was appointed some three years ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and it reported in August last. The Report covered 50 pages of closely-printed matter, and dealt with such a mass of detail as was seldom found in the Report of any Select Committee. He might also say that the Report dealt with matters of a most contentious character. The question, therefore, was whether in these circumstances Parliament was bound in January to legislate upon this subject in priority to any other. The hon. Member who had brought the matter before the House had stated that a Measure dealing with it would pass without difficulty, but he had his doubts upon that point. ["Hear, hear!"] It was quite true that the question did not involve any Party interest, and that it did not divide the two sides of the House, but some of the recommendations of the Committee certainly did raise questions of importance between the towns and the country. ["No!"] Any one who had sat upon the Committee or had looked at its division lists would know that in the divisions the representatives of the large cities voted one way and the representatives of the agricultural districts voted the other upon many of the issues that were raised before them. Let him take the question of food standards. It was impossible to get magistrates or other authorities to agree upon such a standard, and unless a standard was established all legislation on the subject must fail. The Committee agreed that such a standard could not be set up by Act of Parliament, but that it should be established by a Board of Reference, which should consist of scientists and men selected from the mercantile community, and that their standard should be made to have the effect of law by an Order in Council. He had merely to state that fact in order to show the enormous difficulty which the matter involved. Take the question of milk. Let them assume that the Board of Reference set up a standard of 3 per cent. of fat in the case of milk, and that that was legalised. Much of the milk sold now contained more than 3 per cent. of fat, and although they would thus bring the adulterated milk up to 3 per cent. they would offer an inducement to those who sold better milk to work down to what was the legal standard. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Kearley) maintained that many local authorities would not put the Act as it stood into operation, but he did not indicate how the difficulty could be met. What was the whole trend of our legislation? It was to trust the local authorities of the country, and to cast upon local authorities the responsibilities that were now taken by the central authority. In the Committee it was proposed that the

Local Government Board should have the power to take samples in all the places where the local authority failed to do their duty and to prosecute; but he could tell the hon. Gentleman that that the Local Government Board, overweighted as they now were, were not prepared to do.

Mr. KEARLEY remarked that what he had suggested was that the duty should be made compulsory so far as the local authorities were concerned.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL admitted that in some cases the local authorities failed to act. That fact only emphasised the demand he made for time to consider a question so full of difficulties. There was only one other matter to which he wished to refer. The Committee, against his draft Report, carried an Amendment which prohibited the colouring of margarine, and the mixture of margarine with butter. That proposal was strongly resisted by all the representatives of the great towns on the Committee, and he had been informed at the Local Government Board by a deputation that to carry out that proposal meant the total destruction of the margarine trade. He did not wish it to be understood that he was arguing against the recommendations of the Committee; he was simply trying to show that, so far from this being a non-contentious matter, it was full of contention, and contention of the most difficult kind—that between town and country. Having dealt with the merits of the question, he came to what the hon. Gentleman would probably think of greater importance. During the recess a draft Bill was prepared. It had been carefully considered, and was now being so considered, and all he could say was that the whole question was receiving almost daily consideration at the Local Government Board. They were trying to get over the difficulties, and he hoped that at no distant date the Government would be able to submit a Bill to the House dealing with the entire question. ["This Session?"] That was not a question for him, but one which must be put to the Leader of the House. He hoped, however, that in view of the statement he had just made the hon. Member would not think it right to take a Division.

*Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) was glad to hear from his hon. Friend that a Bill on this subject had been drafted, and that it rested with the Leader of the Government in this House to tell them later on whether they were likely to see the Bill this Session. He hoped that in this instance time would permit a Bill to be submitted to the House this year. In the interest of public work it was desirable that the fruits of a Committee's labour should not be delayed too long. He did not believe that the difficulties in this case were as great as his hon. Friend supposed. ["Hear, hear!"] The fact was that the legislation required on this subject was legislation, not for altering the principle of the law, but for improving the administration of the law: for improving the machinery by which the law was carried out. The Local Government Board thought there ought to be one sample of food taken for every thousand people in a district. That was not a high standard to be aimed at. In some places a sample was taken for every 300 people, but in some counties only one sample was taken for every 15,000 inhabitants, showing an almost total neglect of the law as it stood. The consequence was that in those localities adulteration went on with injury to the home producer and general injury to the health and well-being of the people. The Secretary to the Local Government Board spoke about centralisation. Centralisation was not wanted in the direction of making the Local Government Board an active intervener in the detection of adulteration, but it would be a great help even to the largest and most advanced centres of local government if there were some body in London, such as a Central Board of Reference, to which there could be resort for assistance. Therefore, when the Committee suggested the creation of a scientific body, which would be a source of strength to any local body trying to administer the Acts; he thought the recommendation was such as to warrant some more definite promise than they had yet received from the Government. The Birmingham City Council, for example, were anxious to make up their minds as to whether the unlimited use of antiseptics in the treatment of health or not, and they resolved, after obtaining all the information they could, to refer to a body in London—that was the Local Government Board in London—for information as to how they were to be guided with reference to the quantity of antiseptics permissible in foodstuffs. At present there was no authority to whom they could appeal. That was certainly a flaw in our existing arrangements, and until such a body was constituted they could not expect the law to be efficiently carried out. In the absence of such a body, too, they could never expect uniformity of judgment on the Bench in cases of adulteration, and he was confident that if there were such a central authority to refer to, the law would be enforced in many districts where it was now neglected. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, while approving of the principle, spoke of the difficulties of setting up standards in regard to certain articles of food, but he thought it might be done in many cases. In regard to milk, for instance, he did not think the difficulty was insuperable, or that it would involve any injustice or injury to the trade. At all events, he was sure that if some Board of Reference were created on the lines indicated by the Committee—a body in whom the public would feel confidence—an important step would be achieved towards improving the general quality of the food of the people. ["Hear, hear!"] The evidence given before the Committee showed that an enormous amount of adulteration was going on in articles of food mostly of foreign production. The result of this was to so lower prices that in many cases our own producers were forced out of the market, while at the same time it operated strongly against the general production of food in the country. ["Hear, hear!"] It was obvious that the production and supply of good food was a matter of great importance to the health, and vigour, and character of a nation, and this was an object to which every Government should attach importance. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government had professed a desire to undertake social legislation. Here was an opportunity then for them to achieve a great work in this direction, and, in view of the facts and recommendations presented by the Committee, he would urge them to give their attention to the matter as soon as they possibly could. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) said he regretted the line that had been taken by the hon. Member who had spoken on behalf of the Government on this matter. The hon. Member fully admitted the importance of the subject, and the necessity of legislation; but said that further time was required to give the matter full consideration before legislation was undertaken. Yet this Committee had been sitting for two and a half years, and reported in August last. In the case of the Agricultural Rating Bill, which formed one of the principal measures of last Session, and which, by the way, transferred a good sum of money from the pockets of the taxpayers to the agricultural interest, the Government required very much less time to make up their minds about legislation; and yet he did not think that matter was of greater importance to the country than the one under consideration. ["Hear, hear!"] The question was one of considerable magnitude, because it closely affected the health and condition of the people. He believed legislation on the subject—upon the lines of the recommendations of the Committee—was practicable, although the hon. Member for South Tyrone had read into the Report many more difficulties than it contained or involved. ["Hear, hear!"] This subject of food adulteration, moreover, was of great importance to agriculturists, because fair trade was necessary to the sale of their own products. ["Hear, hear!"] The Committee had stated that a large amount of fraud was perpetrated in large quantities of the food imported from abroad, and, to some extent, at home. Especially was this the case in regard to butter, which was largely adulterated with margarine, and as the representative of an agricultural constituency he was able to assure the House that enormous interest was taken in the matter by the farmers of the country. In colour, shape, and consistency margarine was made up to exactly imitate butter, and largely sold as such all over the country. It was not butter at all. Much of this so-called butter or margarine—made of inside fat, oil, and milk—came from Germany; it was sold as Hamburg factory butter in Manchester, and in other places as really pure butter, but evidence before the Committee was given that every sample taken of it was adulterated. It was only fair to our own agriculturists to prevent the importation from abroad of an article so adulterated, and allow it to be palmed off on the people of this country as pure butter. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, it was noteworthy that the profit on margarine was 4d. per lb., whereas on genuine butter it was only 1d. per lb., and therefore an inducement was given to the seller to press the adulterated article upon the people to the detriment of their health. Then, again, foreign cheese was also largely adulterated, and it was so closely made up to resemble British cheese that the public were often deceived. Why, it was actually a fact that some of the articles imported from abroad, and sold in this country, were not allowed to be sold in the countries from which they came. The British farmer was an honest man, and could not compete with fraud of this kind; and consequently he suffered a grievous injustice under the circumstances. ["Hear, hear!"] The existing Acts against adulteration ought to be strengthened, and fresh legislation also applied to meet the difficulty. The Local Government Board thought one sample per 1,000 persons per annum was not an extravagant number of samples to take, but it had been shown that the number of samples taken in some places was largely below this figure. He might mention that in Somersetshire one sample per annum had been taken to every 379 persons, and the extent of adulteration had been found to be 3·6 per cent.; whereas in Oxford, where one sample was taken to over 14,000 persons, the adulteration was 41·7. There were local reasons which often operated to prevent the present Acts being put in force. One Inspector stated before the Committee that—

> "He knew of a local authority in the Metropolis, eight members of which had been convicted of offences under the Acts upon evidence obtained by their own inspector. The result had been that the duties of the inspector under the Acts were now controlled by a committee of the authority, and they decide the cases in which prosecutions are to be undertaken."

Therefore, it was not likely that those eight gentlemen who might be convicted by their own inspectors would be very ready to put the law into operation. Then he contended that the punishment for offences of this kind was altogether inadequate. It had consisted of a fine ranging from 30s. to 40s. It was not at all commensurate with the enormous profits made in the trade, and the Committee recommended that imprisonment should be inflicted where a man kept on breaking the law. This trade was a very large one indeed. The Committee had reported that there was reason to believe that a considerable proportion of the imports of food into the United Kingdom were adulterated. The imports of butter were two and three-quarter million cwt., of margarine nearly one million cwt., of cheese two million cwt., and of condensed milk half a million cwt., and a considerable proportion of this enormous amount of food was adulterated, and yet the Government could not find time to legislate on the subject. His point was that this was not more an agricultural question than a poor man's question. Milk and butter were the necessaries of life, and it was an extraordinary fact that in the poorer districts of the Metropolis the Adulteration Acts were not so strictly enforced as in the richer districts. In Lewisham, Hampstead, and St. James's, Westminster, hardly one sample in 100 were adulterated, while in St. Pancras 43 per cent., in Southwark 46 per cent., and in Lambeth 47 per cent. of the samples were adulterated. The Government said they had not time to deal with this matter. They had the time to mention foreign prison-made goods. He did not want to know where goods were made, but he did want to know that they were what they purported to be. What encouragement was there for farmers to start butter factories, as they had done and still further hoped to do in parts of the country, and to endeavour to win back from the foreigner a portion of the market they had encroached upon, when the Government, which was so professedly the friend of the farmers, would not help them to see that the produce they had to compete with was pure or not? It could not be said that agriculture had had too much of the present Session devoted to it, for this was the first Agricultural Amendment brought forward. The very first day of last Session the Minister for

Agriculture gave notice of a Bill to amend the Agricultural Holdings Act, but this Session Agricultural Holdings only found a place in the Omnibus Clause of the Queen's Speech, to be passed if time permitted. He did think that this Government, which came into power so largely through the support of the agricultural interest, might do something to enable the farmers to help themselves.

*GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest), referring to the suggestion that local authorities were lax in the administration of the Adulteration Acts, said he belonged to a local authority who had endeavoured to put the law into force. Each prosecution cost upwards of £5, and they thought themselves very lucky indeed if they got a penalty of 10s. inflicted on a person they prosecuted, if indeed the summons were not dismissed, and a fine of 10s. was, of course, a perfect farce, and was no deterrent. Unless they could obtain better means of enforcing the law, it would become a question with the body of which he was a member whether they should continue to enforce it or not. He thought the local bodies were unfairly blamed in this matter. Either the magistrates should be called upon to inflict severe penalties, or else a radical change should be made in the law, providing for imprisonment instead of fine after the first or second conviction. Otherwise men would continue to defy the law, and local bodies would cease to make an effort to prevent it.

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.), said he wished to speak as a member of the Committee assenting to the Report, but also because, when Chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, he had moved and obtained the appointment of the Committee. He was bound to say that he thought his hon. Friend opposite in the very vague indication he had given of the possible action of the Government in the future, had not in any way invalidated the ground on which this matter had been brought forward. Without going into any details of the frauds that were committed, or of the minor recommendations, he wished to say, as a member of the Committee, that the Report consisted of two essential heads or divisions. Under one head it discussed amendments in the law and its administration, as to which there was no practical doubt or difficulty whatsoever, and as to which there could be no divergence of opinion; but the other division of the Report was the essential portion, and its nature was an unanswerable argument for dealing promptly with this question. The main recommendation of the Report was that steps should be taken to remove all that sort of difficulty which had beset so many of the Courts, and which had acted as an obstacle to commerce—the uncertainty as to what was meant by certain articles, the uncertainty as to the condition of the law, the uncertainty as to what was adulteration and what was not, and the uncertainty as to what was an honest article and what was not. The main recommendation of the Committee was to take all these questions out of the realm of uncertainty, an uncertainty which now led the Courts into difficulty, and acted as a serious obstacle to the producers of this country, and to obtain accurate and reliable decisions from the highest experts appointed for the purpose of laying down standards which would govern the trade in these articles. Was it not unanswerable to say that the sooner a Court of Reference was set up the better? He had had a great deal to do with the demands of agriculturists for many years, and this demand for protection against adulteration had been one of the demands most earnestly and unanimously formulated by them throughout the country for years past. When the late Liberal Ministry came into power a similar demand for protection against fraud in fertilisers and feeding stuffs had been left over by their predecessors, and the present President of the Local Government Board had failed to deal with it. The Liberal Ministry then dealt with that evil by the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act of 1893. It was the Liberal Ministry also which appointed this Committee, and after a change of Ministry, the Committee had the aid and help of the hon. Gentleman opposite, as the particularly capable representative of the office which would be intrusted with carrying out any legislation that might be passed. It was really absurd that there should be so much doubt and hesitation about the production of a Bill to deal with the question, the main portion of which was contained in so small a compass. The details of administration had been thrashed out again and again by practical men all over the country. The real difficulty of the question, a difficulty he admitted quite as strongly as the Secretary to the Local Government Board, was to determine what was an adulterated article and what was not, and this difficulty would be in a fair way of solution when once a Court of Reference was started. With such a Competent court established there would be a fair prospect of dealing with a vast volume of fraudulent trade which had inflicted much injury upon agriculture and loss upon consumers. To have palmed upon them the hazy outlines of a Bill now in some remote pigeon-hole and not yet even in a final form of preparation, so that it could be laid before the House at any given time, and to which there was not the most distant allusion in the Queen's Speech, was just cause of complaint to Members who took an interest in agricultural questions; and more especially they complained of this conduct from a Government who by rash and reckless pledges gained so many seats in agricultural constituencies. For years legislation of this kind had been asked for by agricultural associations all over the country, and this indefinite postponement by the Government was ungenerous and unfair to agricultural interests, and he hoped his hon. Friend, unless he received an assurance that legislation creating this Court of Reference would be within a reasonable time brought before the House, would by a Division give hon. Members the opportunity of recording opinions on the conduct of Her Majesty's Ministers in meeting this urgent question with a vague promise. ["Hear!"]

*SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee), having sat on the Committee which inquired into this question last Session, said he was surprised to hear the hon. Member for Devonport say that the Report of the Committee was unanimous. There were undoubtedly a number of questions upon which there was substantial agreement, but there were other and very important ones upon which there was much difference of opinion, and on one important point the draft Report passed by the Chairman on behalf of the Local Government Board was set aside. It would be quite a mistake to suppose that there would be no opposition to a Bill to carry out the Report of the Committee as it stood. It had been very truly said there were matters in the Report which were highly contentious. It was not entirely a Report suggesting improvements in machinery; there were proposals or suggestions in it which affected very important principles. It had been admitted that where the existing Acts had been honestly and fairly adminstered, there had been a great decrease in adulteration, and so far as suggestions were made for the improvement of machinery for the existing Acts there would be no opposition raised. But proposals were made in Committee and agreed to by majorities there as to which the Committee were divided into two distinct parties, the town party and the country party. There was a question whether an article of food, which on the evidence of numerous witnesses had been pronounced nutritious, useful and palatable, was to be presented in a form and colour which would prevent its being used to a large extent. There was another proposal to largely increase the powers of the Customs to seize goods at Custom Houses instead of taking samples and following up the cases. In this Amendment he strongly objected to the use of the word "nefarious." To this he certainly could not assent; the word "nefarious" signified "impious," "base," "felonious," "wicked in the extreme," "abominable." [*Laughter.*] What had occurred in the punishment of this great crime under the Act? There had been difficulty in inducing magistrates to convict, not only magistrates who were members of local authorities, but Justices of the Peace who were not, and many stipendiary magistrates had refused larger fines than from 1s. to 40s. Clearly this indicated that they did not regard the offence as it was designated in the Amendment. He observed that the hon. Member for Devonport had not used a word which had cropped up frequently in subsequent speeches—"Margarine." That word was much discussed in Committee. If the Report were carried out undoubtedly it would be an endeavour to strike a fatal blow at the sale of margarine. Hon. Gentlemen had pleaded for the carrying out of the Act in the interests of the poor. Now the poor were great consumers of margarine, which was not placed before them fraudulently but knowingly as margarine. The Report itself gave a remarkable statement on the point to the effect that the Committee had received much evidence as to the wholesome, valuable, and nutritious properties of margarine as a cheap food, not so palatable as good butter but, unquestionably, well-made margarine was more palatable than bad butter. It was said that margarine was sold as butter, but in fact it could only be sold in wrappers having the word "Margarine" in large characters thereon. The poor were anxious to obtain this article, and they obtained it knowing it to be margarine, though in shops where the customer was well known and wished to conceal the fact of his purchasing this article it might be asked for as "butter." It was not necessary to detain the House by dwelling on the point, but it was well known that this nutritive article was sold at half the price of fresh butter, and with the poor it was often a question whether they could supply this to their families with bread or nothing. He strongly condemned the suggested interference with the trade. He much regretted that so many of his hon. Friends had shown the cloven foot of protection. [*Laughter.*] They would be far better employed in using their influence with agricultural communities to induce them to do what the hon. Member for South Molton said had been done in Devonshire, to establish and encourage the factory system under enlightened, intelligent management, such as had really been the cause of this competition of which complaint was made. There had been large importations of Danish and other butters, and why? Because Denmark and other countries which had gone into the factory system were able to put on the market an article of first class character, regularly supplied in excellent condition. It was because of its excellence Danish butter had attained its position. Let the English farmers, with their wives and daughters, devote the same attention as the Danish families did to dairy work, let the same attention be given to the preparation and package of the butter for market, and perhaps the consumer would be able to dispense with the supply of foreign butter. ["Hear!"] But the idea among some of his hon. Friends was that anything that was foreign must be nefarious. ["No, no!"] If that was not the idea it was the declaration of this particular Amendment, but hon. Gentlemen who took that line should remember that so far as our exports were concerned we were the most nefarious people in the world. ["No, no!" *and laughter.*] Certainly foreign manufacturers had equally good ground for such an opinion. Out of samples of butter from fifteen countries only five were found to be in any way adulterated. With regard to the other ten the samples showed "none," "none" all through. With regard even to these five there was in one country, with 21 samples, only two adulterated, and another, with 34, had only five adulterated. He thoroughly endorsed what the Secretary to the Local Government Board had said, namely, that the questions dealt with in this Report were so multifarious, and some of them were of such importance, that he would be making far more haste than good speed if he were to throw on the Table of the House a Bill which, with the well known surplusage of Measures which were to be passed during the Session, would have no chance of getting through. They all knew that the hon. Gentleman applied his mind thoroughly to any subject he might take up, and they might be sure, from their knowledge of his past action, that when this Bill was laid on the table of the House, it would be a Measure which had been carefully prepared with due regard to the important interests that were involved. He thought that instead of an attempt being made to censure the Government for being dilatory they would have been far more worthy of censure if they had precipitately brought into the House a hasty and ill-considered measure. ["Hear, hear!"] For these reasons, as a Member of the Committee, he should certainly support the Government in opposing the Amendment.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) hoped they might now draw this portion of the Debate on the Address to a conclusion. He had really nothing substantial to add to what had fallen from his hon. Friend, which, he thought, was sufficient to show a practical assembly that the Government were not to blame for the course they had taken in the matter. Anybody who had listened to the Debate must be convinced that the subject was one of great difficulty and complexity. It had engaged the attention of a very competent Committee for no less than three years of continuous and arduous labour, and its recommendations were of a complicated and far from being of an uncontroversial character. It must also be evident from the Debate that while there was no party complexion in the matter there was a conflict of material interests between the constituencies represented by gentlemen sitting on different sides of the House, and his experience was that where they found a conflict of material interests the Debates to which they gave rise were quite as long and sometimes quite as heated as any that arose in the ordinary course of warfare between party and party. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not think it would be asserted by any Gentleman that the programme of legislation the Government had put before the House this year was one which would leave them very much time to be filled up by Measures not announced in the Queen's Speech, and the House might rest content with the assurance of his hon. Friend that the matter was under the consideration of his department. The labours they had already devoted to the subject had produced a draft Bill which would require further consideration, but still it was a Bill which had been thrown into some sort of preliminary shape. Those labours would be continued, and he thought it would be asking more from the Government than could fairly be demanded at this stage of the Session to require them to give any sort of pledge as to the period when they would find themselves in a position to deal with the question. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. THOMAS LOUGH (Islington, W.) observed that they had got an existing law in this matter, and he thought one of the most unsatisfactory things in connection with the answer given by the hon. Member representing the Local Government Board, was that he did not make any promise that there should be a firm enforcement of the existing law. A good deal could be done under that law. He must say that, although he could not agree with all the conclusions of his hon. Friend who had last spoken, he did think there were grave faults in the particular Amendment before them, which savoured a great deal too much of Protection in the latter part. He went thoroughly with the first two or three lines of the Amendment, and if he could get an assurance from the hon. Gentleman that the existing law so far as it could be made to meet the case would be strictly applied, he would readily accept the assurances already given. He wished to give one illustration of how much could be done under that law. There was one trade that had been singled out in this Report from all other trades, namely the tea trade, in which a good many samples had been examined and not one case of adulteration was found. There was a particular section under the Act of 1875 by which the Customs authorities could make a stringent examination of any tea suspected even of being adulterated, and could stop it at the port. The fear of the operation of the Act had been perfectly successful in arresting adulteration, which had gone on to a certain extent before. He thought that Act was capable of a far larger application. When they turned to the article of coffee he was sorry to say the Report was an unsatisfactory one, for every species seemed to be adulterated in this country to a larger extent than any other article. That illustrated the mistake made in this Amendment. It was the foreigner who was hit here. They got all their best food from foreigners, whilst the worst adulteration was done in this country. An hon. Member had said that the British farmer was an honest man. He might be, but he was not the noblest work of God. He was a very stupid man, because he had been cut out of every trade he ought to command in this country by intelligent foreigners. They got the best butter and the best apples from abroad, because home producers did not follow the same intelligent processes that foreigners adopted. For his part he wished to associate himself with the protest against the Protectionist aspect of part of the Amendment. They wanted to stop adulteration, but they did not want to stop the importation of foreign food. They wanted an equal law to be applied to the foreign and the native adulterator, and if that were done he thought they would have arrived at a most excellent system. If they had an assurance that the existing law would be enforced in the case of all articles, and the Bill brought forward as early as possible, they might now take a decision on the question.

MR. KEARLEY was willing that the Debate should now draw to a close, and with a view to this result he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, who had said, as he understood him, that at as early a period as possible the Bill would be submitted to Parliament, to go a step further and say it should be brought in during this Session.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY was very unwilling to make any promise which might result in disappointment, and which it might not be possible to fulfil to the absolute letter. All he could say, therefore, was that among the large number of measures competing for the support of the Government and the consideration of the House, this was one to which they attached importance. He could not go further than that. With regard to the existing law, he believed that rested not with any central but with the local authority. He would inquire whether or not it rested with the central authority, and see what could be done.

MR. KEARLEY observed that in view of the right hon. Gentleman's answer he should challenge a division.

Question, "That those words be there added," put and negatived.

REGISTRATION LAWS.

MR. EDWARD STRACHEY (Somerset, S.) had the next Amendment on the Paper, which was to add at the end of the Address the words:—

> "But we humbly express our regret that no measure is announced by Your Majesty for a simplification of the registration laws for Parliamentary and Local Government elections, so that duly qualified persons may be placed upon the electoral register without the present unnecessary complications and delay."

***MR. SPEAKER** ruled that this Amendment was out of order, inasmuch as it anticipated a Bill of which notice had been given dealing with the same subject.

MANNING OF BRITISH MERCHANT VESSELS.

On the return of MR. SPEAKER after the usual interval,

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) moved, as an Amendment to the Address, to add at the end:—

> "And we humbly represent to your Majesty the regret of this House that your Majesty's Gracious Speech contains no promise that any attempt shall be made this Session to pass into law a Bill dealing with the question of manning of British merchant vessels, in accordance with the recommendations of a departmental committee appointed to inquire into the under-manning of British merchant vessels; and this House further expresses its regret at the continued alarming loss of life at sea."

He said that whenever there had been any shipping legislation brought before the House it had been the usual practice of gentlemen interested to stir up a great agitation upon the ground that the shipping interest should be left absolutely alone, and that no legislation should be allowed to interfere with the management by shipowners of their business or property. This House for many years had interfered with factories, mines, and workshops, and legislation affecting those interests had never produced anything like the agitation there had been in connection with shipping. He did not complain very much of shipowners; the people he had fought and intended to fight were the managing shipowners or shipmongers—the men who induced the general public to invest their money in shipping property on false pretences, and who had no real interest at stake themselves. He quoted from a prospectus issued recently in Cardiff where the managing director of a shipping company was advising people to invest their money in one of their vessels, and promising a return of 45 per cent. on the capital invested. Managing owners had been the curse of the shipping trade. They constantly cut down the number of men employed on board, and, by undermanning the ships, were responsible for a good deal of the loss of life at sea. Whatever loss of life there was at sea at present, he asserted that managing owners were more responsible for it than anyone else he knew. They promised big dividends, which they had not been able to realise, and when it came to a question of actual management they continually cut down expenses in every direction. More especially had they cut down the number of men employed on board. He urged that under-manning was responsible for a considerable amount of loss of life at sea. On January 8th 1894 a vessel called the *Port Gareth* was lost in Brandon Bay with all hands. In that case there would have been no inquiry but for the fact that one of the apprentices on the vessel had kept a log of the voyage, and had dispatched it to his father a few days before the vessel foundered. From that log it appeared that the crew consisted of a master, two mates and a carpenter, one sail-maker, steward, and cook, six able seamen (all foreigners), two ordinary seamen (boys under 17, one of whom had never been to sea before), and six apprentices, five of whom had never been to sea before. This vessel carried 500 yards of canvas, which the crew had to work. It was found, at the Board of Trade inquiry, that the vessel had been lost in consequence of being undermanned and inefficiently manned. It appeared from the log that before the loss of the vessel a large number of the men were disabled by scurvy and sea-sickness; and the six able seamen were possibly not conversant with English. He would not say that shipowners deliberately sent their vessels to sea in an unseaworthy condition, in order to make a profit from the insurance, but it was a remarkable fact that in the case of the majority of ships lost the owners made a profit by the loss. The vessel he had mentioned was insured for £10,000, and the vessel, if sold, would not have fetched more than £6,000. The penalty imposed on the owner for this loss of 21 lives was a fine of £75. He asked the Solicitor General whether further proceedings could not be taken by Government, and he was informed that under the existing law there would be no chance of a conviction. To show what some shipowners were capable of, he would read a series of letters from one firm, whose name he would give if it were desired, to the captain of one of the vessels which had completed the voyage, and was lying at Falmouth for a week or two awaiting orders. The owners were anxious to get rid of the crew to save pay. The first letter ran—

"In reply to your telegram with regard to crew, we wired you to say that you were only to give the crew salt-beef, no fresh provisions, and keep them hard at work, so that they may get tired of the ship and agree to a forfeit of £3. We cannot hope to pay the crew off without this forfeit. . . . Use your own boats in going to and from the ship. We are most anxious to keep down expenses."

The next letter read—

"We received your telegram advising us that you had paid off ten men with a reduction of £3 each. As we do not expect orders before four days, we should like you to see that you get rid of as many men as possible."

Then a wire followed—

"If you can get any more of your able seamen or ordinary seamen paid off with forfeit, do so."

Then another letter—

"Make a quick run after you get your orders and have no detention, but get to sea at once. If you are ordered to the Clyde, do not take a pilot, and you will not require much towage. Run up the Clyde as far as possible under sail. As to Liverpool, you will require little or no towage there, and no pilot. We hope you are doing your utmost to keep down expenses at Falmouth, which is a matter of great importance."

There were a good many managing owners who were as ready as these gentlemen, at all times and by all means, to cut down expenses, regardless of the safety of the lives of the men employed. Of course, all shipowners were not like that. There were some in the House who would scorn to be parties to any conduct of the kind. But as long as there were men who were willing to undertake such risks for the sake of paltry saving, it was the duty of Parliament to step in to protect the seaman. He induced the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division (Mr. Mundella) to appoint a Committee to inquire into the manning of ships; and for the first time in the history of the country a fair and reasonable Committee was appointed, and all interests were represented. It was not a shipowners' Committee, nor was it a sailors' Committee. It was a Committee composed of men representing every interest connected with shipping. It sat for two years; visited the principal ports of the United Kingdom, and examined 176 witnesses. In fact, no Committee had ever done its work in a more thorough manner. Thirteen out of the 17 members of the Committee had signed the Majority Report, which declared that undermanning did largely prevail in a certain class of vessels, and that it was a danger to the lives of the sailors who went to sea in those ships. The Report did not agree with the statement that undermanning could be dealt with without further legislation by a more strict definition and enforcement of the existing law applicable to unseaworthiness in regard to the undermanning of ships, and by the punishment of persons responsible for sending such ships to sea. At the present moment it was possible for a Board of Trade surveyor to go on board a vessel, and if he found that the bell on which the time of day was struck was a quarter of an inch short of the measurement provided by the Board of Trade, he could detain that vessel in port as being in an unseaworthy condition. But when it came to the question of the manning of the ship, the surveyor had no power. Yet the manning of the ship was the most important matter of all. The finest ship ever built, if not properly manned, was as unseaworthy as the worst old tub afloat on the ocean; and yet in regard to manning the only authority possessed by the official of the Board of Trade was to see that the officers of the ship had got their certificates. In fact, if the officers had got their certificates, the owners might send the ship to sea without a single sailor, and the officers and the official of the Board of Trade would be powerless in the matter. That being the condition of affairs, he could not understand how the Government could delay any longer in dealing with this question of undermanning. It was a question of life and death to men who went down to the sea in ships. If there were only a few lives at stake he would probably not say so much on the matter. But he knew that every day and every week and every month of the year thousands of men were sent to their doom in consequence of ships in an unseaworthy condition being allowed to leave the ports. He therefore most strongly entered his protest against any further delay in dealing with this most important question. In regard to the Minority Report of the Committee, he should say that a more misleading document had never been submitted to the House. In the first paragraph of that report it was stated that the evidence had not been presented in that unbiassed spirit that was desirable. Had those gentlemen supposed that the seamen who were to be examined before the Committee would give evidence in favour of the shipowners and not against them? Was it not only reasonable to suppose that the seamen would give their evidence in a free and open manner, and speak the truth as to their actual everyday experiences at sea? The Minority Report also declared that the details of the construction of vessels intended to carry passengers were subjected to rules fixed by the Board of Trade. But the complaint was never made that passenger vessels were undermanned. These ships were always well manned, for, were it otherwise, the travelling public would very soon enter a protest. The complaint was that the tramp steamers were undermanned; and this allusion to passenger steamers was really an attempt to mislead the public. There again he had to complain of this one-sided minority report. The Gentlemen who signed this Report knew perfectly well that there was no restriction for the carrying of deck cargo from April to October to the ports of the United Kingdom. The only restriction which existed was that in the winter months vessels should only be allowed to carry three feet of timber to ports in the United Kingdom, but they might carry 12 or 14 feet to any Continental port. As to the qualification of the officers, was he to understand that the shipowners objected to officers passing a Board of Trade examination to prove that they were qualified to do their work? Was that any hardship to the shipowning community? As to the inspection of the accommodation it was a mere farce. The minority on this Committee reported that if the restrictions and regulations under which shipowners now conducted their business were unduly extended, there would be considerable risk, they would feel that their personal responsibility was lessened. But there was no class of employers in the country who had escaped more from legislative interference than had the shipowners. ["Hear, hear!"] He would ask those gentlemen to read the Factories Act, the Railways Regulation Act, or the Coal Mines Regulation Act. He would remind them also that they were able in 1880 to induce that House to deny to seamen the right and protection of the Employers' Liability Act, and some of them came down and voted that mineowners and railway and factory employers should be saddled with the responsibility of that Act, while they voted against its extension to seamen. The shipowners had for the last 25 years been complaining that, in consequence of legislative interference, the shipping trade was being driven from the country, and yet in that time we had increased our tonnage from about five millions to about 13 millions. The shipowners complained that a wider interpretation had been given to the reference to this Committee than they believed was intended, and called attention to the fact that not only had their inquiry extended to the efficiency of the manning of ships, but it had attempted to measure the degree and extent of labour imposed on the individual members of a crew, and to fix by law a limit thereto. That referred to the question of the manning of the stokehold. It was found, on taking evidence from experts, that the only safe method of dealing with the question of the number of men that should be employed in the stokehold, was not to go by the horse-power of the engines or the tonnage of the vessel, but by the amount of coal that was consumed in the stokehold. He thought himself that two and a-half tons of coal for 24 hours was sufficient for any one man to work. It should be remembered also that, owing to the way in which the coal was worked and handled, the actual amount was sometimes not two and a half tons but five tons. And yet these Gentlemen who signed the Minority Report said there was no necessity to interfere, as, if the shipowner did not employ a sufficient number of men to do the stoking, he would be himself the loser. Published statistics showed that there were more suicides among the firemen in the stokehold of a ship than among any other class of the community; and the reason was that these men were called upon to do more work than they were able to do. When their vessel was in the Red Sea they sometimes came right up from the stokehold and jumped overboard. There was every justification for the State to interfere to give these men protection. These gentlemen claimed that rebutting evidence had been given in regard to the statements made by witnesses about certain ships, and said that where rebutting evidence had not been given no close inquiry into the circumstances was possible. The only rebutting evidence consisted of a number of letters from the owners of various ships, who said that their ships were not undermanned. But they did not come before the Committee to subject themselves to cross-examination, and he contended that their letters were not evidence at all, and that they were not worth the paper they were written upon and should not be quoted as a reason the Government should not interfere. They stated that there had been 33 formal Board of Trade Inquiries held during the last 16 years into casualties to foreign bound and cross Channel steamers of over 200 tons each, in which the Court expressed the opinion that the vessel carried too few hands. But in no case was it held that the vessel was actually lost through such cause. He held in his hand Reports of a number of Board of Trade Inquiries, and he believed that in all there were 33 cases, and in every one the ships were undermanned. While the Courts of Inquiry might not have been able to say that the vessel was actually lost in consequence of being 'undermanned, if a vessel was undermanned and that led to the vessel stranding or to a collision through being undermanned he contended that the direct cause of loss was undermanning. The Committee talked about the number of vessels in which undermanning was complained of, and endeavoured to compare the number of vessels lost where undermanning was alleged, with the manning scale adopted by the Committee. One word about the conduct of the minority with reference to the manning scale when discussed by the Committee: They threw every obstacle in the way of the majority Report. One Gentleman in fact absolutely declined to discuss the majority Report. But when it came to a question of the manning scale everyone of these Gentlemen endeavoured to reduce the number of men that the majority Report proposed. He himself endeavoured to give a scale more liberal than that proposed by the majority, but the Gentlemen who signed the Minority Report voted against him every time, and then in the Minority Report they complained that the proposed scale of manning by the Committee would actually leave the ships in a worse position than they were at the present moment, Courts of Inquiry having held that they were undermanned. They said the aggregate tonnage of 14 ships was 14,654, and the crew carried was 291. A similar number of vessels of larger tonnage would, under the scheme, have to carry a total crew of 235 "effective hands." There was a difference between 291 hands and 235 effective hands. Effective hands meant men well able to do their work. It was quite possible these ships might have 400 hands, but if not effective they should not be taken into consideration. Then the Report said:

> "We have been unable to pursue a similar investigation as regarded the number of hands carried in the stoke hole, in the absence of necessary information with regard to the consumption of coal from voyage to voyage, which is the proposed basis of the manning scale for firemen and trimmers. We submit, however, that the evidence of the witnesses called to prove the prevalence of undermanning amply demonstrates when this is tested by the scale for manning adopted by those members of the Committee, who consider vessels are sent to sea short handed that the assertions are unfounded, and we confidently submit that those who demand legislative interference have signally failed to substantiate their case."

He contended that the evidence had proved over and over again a strong case in favour of legislative interference. It was said it was not competent for the Committee to define a scale for the manning of sailing ships. Why not? If the tonnage of vessels were compared they would be found to be nearly all upon the same scale, and there was no reason why the Government should not by law fix what the actual number carried should be. "As regarded steamers, from the point of view of safety there was no necessity whatever to determine the number of firemen, coal trimmers, and greasers to be employed in connection with the machinery of steamers. Their speed alone would be affected by the number which might be so occupied in the stoke-hole." If this had been written by longshoremen who knew nothing about ships or seamen he would not have said so much about it, but coming from Gentlemen supposed to be familiar with shipping business it was astonishing. They must forget that often on board steamers the bilges got choked through not being cleared when the vessel was in port. If there were only the ordinary number of men to do the necessary stoking on the vessel, where were the engineers going to get the extra hands from to assist in cleaning the bilges and keeping the pumps clear? It was complained that it was not possible to fix the number of men according to the amount of coal consumed. At the present time when shipowners signed a crew on they did not take into account the amount of coal consumed. They signed five, six, or ten men according to the size of the vessel, and it was immaterial to them whether they had to work 40 tons or 60 tons; they had to do all the work, just the same. The question was an important one, because it affected not only sailors and firemen but the welfare of the nation, bearing as it did directly not only on the manning of the Mercantile Marine but of the Navy. The shipowners endeavoured to prove that the chief Board of Trade Surveyor for the north-east coast stated in his evidence that cargo steamers were quite as well manned as passenger steamers. He said there was no such evidence to prove that. They also stated that the superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office at Cardiff had never heard of a case of undermanning; but if any hon. Gentleman would peruse the evidence he would find that statement also fell, because that official stated over and over again in his evidence that there were a large number of complaints that ships were very much undermanned. The Minority Report also stated that were attempts made to fix the minimum number of men to be employed, the effect would be similar to that which had followed the adoption of the load-line, namely, that it would afford to shipowners a shelter from their proper responsibility, and under cover of the minimum manning scale, there would be an inducement to owners to accept the minimum as removing responsibility from their shoulders, and in many cases a reduction in the number of those now carried would be the result. He asked the gentlemen who signed that paragraph if they maintained that the shipowner who was now carrying 24 hands, believing 24 hands to be absolutely necessary for the manning of his vessel, was going to reduce his crew to 20 hands because the scale of the Manning Committee said that the minimum number for such a ship should be 20. It would be a great reflection on shipowners if they adopted such a course. Then the Report went on to say that the loss of life at sea, especially in recent years, showed that the necessity for further legislation had disappeared. In this connection he would ask the House to consider a few figures. When they were considering the number of men lost at sea they ought to compare it with the number of men who lost their lives in following industries on shore, because he had heard it stated by shipowners that the calling of a sailor or a fireman was as safe as any other calling. During the ten years, from 1886-95 inclusive, the number killed in three of the most hazardous shore industries was as follows:—factory and workshop operatives, 4,168; miners, 10,991; and railway servants, 5,074; or a total of 20,000. During the same period 22,000 seamen were killed or drowned. The total number of people employed in the shore industries he had referred to was 5,370,200, while the total number employed at sea, including fishermen, was 241,000; so that in those shore industries the yearly average was 2,013, the weekly average 38, and the daily average 5½, while at sea the yearly average of killed and drowned was 2,200, the weekly average 42, and the daily average 6. Out of five and a half million of shore workers the average number of fatal accidents during the ten years had been a fraction less than 3¾ in every thousand, while out of less than a quarter of a million of seamen the average number of killed and drowned had been a fraction over 93 in every thousand, a fraction over 9 in every hundred, and a fraction less than one in every ten in each year. He did not say that all those lives were lost through causes for which the shipowners themselves were responsible, but the same thing applied to the industries on shore, and he said that when it was found that 20,000 men only were killed out of five and a half millions, against 22,000 out of a quarter of a million, he and those he represented had a right to come to the House and ask that some legislation should be passed in order to endeavour to reduce that loss of life. He maintained it was idle for the shipowners to talk about loss of life at sea during the last 10 or 15 years. What about our Lifeboat Institution; what about the improvement of the lights on shore; what about the appliances all round the coast for saving life, and what about the thousands of lives saved annually by steamers on the ocean? If they could get at the actual number of casualties that occurred on board merchant ships, and place against them the various methods that had been adopted for the prevention of loss of life at sea, he thought that it would be found that the shipowners themselves had done but little towards reducing that loss. He wished to know whether that House and the Government would permit this state of things to go on much longer, simply because the all-powerful shipowners asserted that the shipping industry would be ruined if legislative restrictions were to be imposed upon it. He might remind the House that similar arguments as to the ruining of trade by legislation were advanced against the Employers' Liability Acts when they were introduced into that House. In spite of those arguments, however, the Acts were passed, with the result that great benefit had been conferred upon the workpeople by those Acts, without trade being in any way injuriously affected by them. He asked the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the Government to hold out some hope to the sailors and firemen of our Mercantile Marine that some Measure would be introduced, having for its object the preservation of their lives. There was this curious fact about the minority Report—namely, that it asserted that the manning scale would not work; nevertheless they recommended that every ship of 150 feet long should be compelled to have at least one certificated officer and three men on a watch. But watches of that strength were never employed on board our merchant ships of that size, and therefore it was evident from the Minority Report itself that our Mercantile Marine was undermanned. In the case of the vessel that ran into the *Elbe* and sunk her, whereby 375 lives were lost, it was shown that she had only a crew of 12 instead of 16 men—the minimum number required by the Minority Report. In these circumstances he failed to see how the minority were justified in stating that a manning scale was not necessary. In regard to the rating qualification, the shipowners were afraid to adopt the principle that certificates of rating should be obtained either by length of service or by examination, because they thought that, in the event of an industrial dispute, such certificates might be of some advantage to the men. Personally he was not in favour of examination, because he thought that the better practice would be to give certificates only to men who had had a certain amount of experience at sea. He suggested that, in order to prevent the certificates from being misused, the Board of Trade should require a sufficient description of the holder to be placed on the back of the certificate. As to the manning question generally, he had no doubt that the most serious question was that of having an effective reserve for the Royal Navy. That important question would undoubtedly be raised in that House during the Session. There could be no doubt but that we were rapidly losing British sailors and firemen in our Mercantile Marine, and that they were being replaced by Lascars and foreigners. At the present time we had 30,000 Lascars employed in the British Mercantile Marine, whereas 20 years ago there were only 6,000 of them in it. At one time Lascars were employed only on liners, whereas now they were to be found in large numbers on our ordinary cargo ships, on which they were replacing white men on a rapidly increasing scale. Again, there were 30,000 foreigners on board our mercantile vessels, and they consisted not only of natives of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, but of Turks, Greeks, and Italians: Every year British sailors were becoming fewer in number, and he asked whether it was wise or prudent that Great Britain, which possessed the largest mercantile fleet in the world, should be dependent to so great an extent upon the seamen of foreign nations? Many people might ask, "Why don't boys take more readily to the sea service?" Parents objected to pay large premiums to bind their sons as apprentices to the service. When he said that often premiums of £200 were required, hon. Members would well understand the reluctance on the part of parents to send their boys to sea. Furthermore, what had the ordinary able seaman to look forward to after he had served his apprenticeship? Many shipowners did not pay their men more than £3 or £3 3s. per month. Men had to run the risk of being at times out of work, and frequently had to pay their fare from one part of the country to the other, which practically reduced their wages to as low as £2 10s. per month. Could it be expected that lads of spirit and intelligence would flock to our sea service when such conditions obtained? Certainly he should do all he could to dissuade lads from going to sea in the present circumstances. One important question was, how were we to provide a good and efficient reserve unless something was done. Various suggestions had been made. It had been suggested that there should be training ships for the merchant service. It had also been suggested that the Government should subsidise certain shipowners by paying them certain premiums upon every apprentice carried. He hoped the Government would never entertain such a proposal as the latter, but that they would this Session deal with the question of the manning of ships, first of all from the point of view of overwork, and secondly from the standpoint of the loss of life at sea. Seamen and firemen could not, unfortunately, indulge in the luxury of voting at Parliamentary Elections, but if they could not vote themselves they knew those who could, and unless the Government would deal with the question of the manning of ships, in accordance with the Report of the Departmental Committee, he should take every opportunity at every bye-election of writing upon the wall that 22,000 men had been lost in ten years. If this or any Government remained indifferent to the lives of our men at sea, they would soon find that their majority in the House of Commons would reduce, if not quite dwindle away. He thanked the House for listening to him so patiently, and concluded by moving the Amendment to the Address which stood in his name.

Mr. ANDREW PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) seconded the Amendment, and complimented the hon. Member for Middlesbrough upon the admirable, cool, and fair statement of his case. Parliament had often recognised that the sailor was unable to take care of himself in many worldly matters, and in matters affecting his own welfare the sailor was a child, totally incapable of taking his own part. There was no class of the community more entitled to protective legislation than that of our seamen, for the all sufficient reason that they carried on their business on board a ship upon which from the very nature of things there was despotic government. For refusing to do the simplest thing the sailor was liable to be put in irons. As to the necessity of legislation for the protection of the seaman, no one who had read the evidence given before the Committee could doubt it for a moment. Thirteen out of seventeen of the Committee had stated several points on which legislation was desirable, and it was too late in the day now to say that sailors were not entitled to all the protection the House could give. Parliament had passed protective legislation for those who worked in shops, in factories, in mines, and on railways; indeed, there was hardly a section of the community that had not benefited in this way. Then surely the sailor had a right to legislative protection from the unfair conditions which his occupation might impose on him. ["Hear, hear!"] The Committee were appointed to deal specifically with the question of undermanning, and whatever might be said to the contrary the existence of the evil to a considerable extent had been proved up to the hilt. It had not only been proved before the Committee, but also in Court. The Committee mentioned the case of the *Deeside*, which was run down and several lives lost, when at the time of the accident only two men were on watch, and one of them had to leave that duty to trim a lamp. That case was heard in the Admiralty Court, and the Judge pronounced a judgment which led to the appointment of the Committee. Instances of the dangers of undermanning were given in relation to two other vessels, and although no doubt could be entertained that undermanning existed, the Board of Trade were advised in each case that a prosecution for that offence would not, under the circumstances, be successful. In presence of those facts there could be no doubt as to the necessity of legislation for the protection of the seaman. Still, he thought the case for the seaman was not as strongly presented as it might have been. The Committee had intimated that they had not received the information and assistance from the masters and officers of vessels which they might have expected. The fact was that the men were anxious as to the consequences which might follow in regard to their employment if they attended and gave evidence. ["Hear, hear!"] One of the most important subjects which the Committee considered was that of the manning of vessels, and they recommended that a scheme should be framed for the manning of both sailing and steam vessels. It was said that there were difficulties in the way of framing such a scheme; but other countries—New Zealand and Canada, for instance—had framed schemes of the kind, and surely England ought to be able to do so, especially as the matter was one which closely affected the interests of the country generally, no less than those of the Mercantile Marine. The question was simply one of arrangement and organisation. It was curious that while every one admitted the existence of undermanning, such difficulty should be raised about framing a scheme to prevent it. Another specific recommendation was that the undermanning of a vessel should by law be made evidence of the unseaworthiness of that vessel. At present there was no authority to detain a vessel that was undermanned, but the effect of the recommendation, if comprehended in the law, would be that if a vessel which intended to sail for anywhere was undermanned, it should be considered as an unseaworthy vessel and detained. In the case of all the recommendations of the Committee he did not think they could look for anything but the ready acquiescence of the President of the Board of Trade to move in that House for the necessary power to remove those disabilities to which the Committee drew such forcible attention. There was another point to which he would refer briefly—the results following from undermanning. There was no doubt very great difficulty in ascertaining particulars of undermanning. To begin with, a vessel might never be heard of again. Some sixty or seventy vessels disappeared every year. There never could be any information as to whether those vessels were undermanned or not, except sometimes that in the inquiry which took place evidence was furnished as to the number of the crew that the vessel tained. Then again there were many carried when she left the port. Beyond that nothing further could be ascer- total wrecks. They never knew whether the direct cause of the wreck was the want of sufficient hands to navigate the vessel. His hon. Friend drew attention to the proportionate number of seamen who lost their lives as compared with those employed on shore. The magnitude of the figures might have been made much clearer to the House. A few years ago he had occasion to take out these figures for an article he was writing in connection with employers' liability, and he found that in the year 1892 the number of men who lost their lives in their ships as compared with the number of men who were killed in mines or on the railways—the two most dangerous occupations on shore—were very nearly as six to one in proportion to the number employed. This was a part of the question that might very well be made the subject of appealing to the feelings of the House, but he did not think it was at all necessary to do that. He thought they could appeal with confidence to the President of the Board of Trade to take into his sympathetic consideration the circumstances in which seamen carried on their calling; to consider the specific recommendations of the Committee; and, as soon as possible, to legislate for these circumstances with a view to remove those disabilities under which sailors laboured at the present time.

***SIR ARTHUR FORWOOD** (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said this was not the first occasion on which the shipowning industry—which has done more than any other industry to raise the prestige and to increase and extend the trade and enterprise and commerce of this country—had been held up to opprobrium by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough. The hon. Member had stated that, from his own knowledge, shipowners were accustomed to take on board their vessels such people as carters, farmers, and others of that character, and call them sailors. [MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: "Hear, hear!"] He remembered that about the time of the appointment of this Commission the hon. Member told the House that on one of the Allan Line steamers the men refused to accept the owners' terms, that hands were collected out of the casual wards of the workhouses—["hear, hear"]—from tramping dens, and from men discharged from gaol. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): It is done in the East-end of London to-day.

***SIR ARTHUR FORWOOD**: And that out of 20 who signed as seamen, 16 were unable to prove one day's service at sea, and that, out of 30 firemen, not more than five had ever been to sea. That statement came before the Commission, and as it had been made on the authority of the hon. Member's own experience, a Committee of the Board of Trade was appointed to examine into it. He asked the House to measure the value of most of the statements made by the hon. Member that night by the Report of this Departmental Committee upon this particular statement. That Committee stated

> "that there was considerable intimidation of the old hands who wished to continue in the ship at the reduced rates; that the crew were duly signed on in the presence of the Board of Trade, the bulk of them producing proof of service; that the emigration and medical officers were satisfied both as to the physical fitness of the crew and of their capacity as seamen; that the Committee were satisfied as to the sufficiency of the crews; that, while the circumstances of the crew's engagement were irregular—

that was owing to the intimidation of the strike created by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough—

> "these were forced on the owners; that the Committee considered much of the men's evidence as untrustworthy, and viewed with suspicion the connection of the Seamen's Union with it."

He had ventured to bring to the bar of public opinion a statement made in the House by the hon. Member for Middlesbro', affecting the conduct of shipowners as regarded the treatment of their men, and the class of men shipped.

That statement was made at a time when it was impossible for anyone to rise and answer it, and for the time the statement of the hon. Member stood. Fortunately the Board of Trade made an inquiry through their own officers, and the Report from which he had read disproved from beginning to end the statement made with regard to that ship which led in great measure to the appointment of this Commission. The hon. Member for Middlesbro' had stated that his remarks were not so far as manning was concerned to be applied to passenger vessels. But the vessel he had mentioned *was* a passenger ship. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir Charles Dilke) in a speech he made not very long ago to the Shipmasters' Society of London alluded to losses from undermanning and gave five vessels, in one of which he said 112 lives were lost. He asked the attention of the House to the opinion of the Court on this case of the vessel in which 112 lives were lost. This was the case of the *Roumania*. The Court said the vessel was manned "in accordance with the practice of many large passenger vessels"—and it might be said that her crew would have been approved by the Board of Trade. The Report went on to say that the "Court thought there should have been more than four quartermasters." That was the extent of the opinion of the Court as to undermanning, and no one could suggest for a moment upon this illustration of the right hon. Baronet that the loss of the vessel was due to undermanning.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: All that I did was to read from the Report of the Committee of which the right hon. Gentleman was a member, a list of ships and the heading which was put to it by the Committee. I used no words of my own, I quoted literally the words from the summary used by the Committee.

*SIR ARTHUR FORWOOD said he did not know as to the summary, he was simply commenting on the Report of the speech as he had received it, and he asked the House to observe what would have been the complement of the crew according to the scale set out in the majority Report of the Manning Committee, as compared with the actual number. In either case there was a master and three subordinate officers. The Committee recommended a boatswain and six "A.B.'s." As a matter of fact the vessel had the boatswain and four quartermasters, with 21 Lascars, and as 21 Lascars were equal to 14 "A.B." seamen, the crew was beyond the scale of the Committee. Other evidence was given and other vessels were quoted, but not in one instance could the loss be attributed to undermanning. Then he carried the matter a step further. Taking the Report of the Manning Committee there were 33 inquiries into the cases of vessels alleged to have been undermanned, but not in one of these cases could it be stated that the vessel had been lost by reason of her having too few hands. Fifteen of these vessels had a number of hands equal to the scale of the Committee, 13 were short by one, and five were short by two, and as a matter of fact, taking the whole 33 vessels in the aggregate, it would be found that whereas by the scale 299 men would be required, they really carried 308, and these were vessels brought before the Court to be dealt with on the ground of undermanning. If Members would look at the evidence laid before the Committee they would find that if they compared several ships of equal tonnage they would find that the decisions of the Court varied. In fact, it was impossible by any scale to determine what should be the proper number of hands to put on any given vessel. The particular circumstances of build, of the trade in which she was engaged, the position of the steering gear, the provision of labour-saving appliances, were important considerations in a matter of this kind. There were before the Committee 102 vessels named by witnesses as having been undermanned, but upon examination into the facts it was found that if manned according to scale their crews would have numbered 1,111, whereas their crews actually numbered 1,197. After all, the shipowners and those interested in the shipping industry were as keenly alive to the safety of life and the protection of those who intrusted themselves to their ships as any men in this country connected with any industry, and were there that continued loss of life at sea alluded to in the Amendment, he for one would be the last to stand up and ask the House not to take into consideration some legislation to effectively stop such a state of things. But what were the facts? The number of lives lost by wrecks and casualties in 1893 on steam vessels was 576; in 1894 it had fallen to 444; and in 1895 to 370; whilst in five years the tonnage of vessels had increased from 6,000,000 to 10,000,000. For 1896 they had only returns as regarded the loss of life for ten months, the number for that period being 364. This total, however, included the sad loss of 103 lives in the *Drummond Castle*, and no one would suggest that that accident resulted in any way from the number of men carried by the vessel. In 1893, among the 60,000 men employed in the Royal Navy, the loss of life was 362, whilst in the mercantile marine it was far less in proportion to the number of sailors employed. The sixth paragraph of the Report of the majority of the Commission said:—

> "We desire, after hearing the evidence, to express the opinion that the large majority of British ships are managed with ability and judgment worthy of the best traditions of British shipowners, and they are, as a rule, manned with careful regard to the safety of life and welfare of the crew."

["Hear, hear!"] Another test which showed that shipowners were acting fairly with regard to the manning of their vessels, was afforded by the fact that 41 sailing vessels which had been transferred from the British to foreign flags only carried 667 sailors, as against 883 when owned by British shipowners—a reduction of 20 per cent. Not only did this mean a reduction in wages, but the foreigners were allowed to carry much larger cargoes of dead weight than was permissible in the case of British ships. With regard to the question of rating and certificates, he considered the men who were to command the ships and those who had to pay the wages would naturally wish to have the best men and the best work, and they were the most proper persons to choose competent crews for their ships. Complaint was made by the hon. Member for Middlesbro' that foreigners and Lascars were being taken on board British vessels in larger numbers. He was not surprised at that. If there was one person in the country more responsible than another for that action it was the hon. Member for Middlesbro', who had been at the head of great trade agitations. One of the latest efforts of the hon. Member was to inculcate into those who followed him the course that if the wages were in their opinion not adequate they should make up their minds to regulate the amount of work by their wages. That was teaching men to act, he would almost say, fraudulently and dishonestly. It was teaching them that they might engage openly to do their best in an employer's service, with a mental reservation that they would do less work than the employer had a right to expect. These men were required to wear a button, which had become known as the "skulker's button," and it was not to be wondered at that shipowners would not have men who would wear a badge of slavery, and resorted to the employment of foreigners, many of whom were found to be more satisfactory, more amenable to discipline, and of greater sobriety than many British seamen found about our docksides. If the President of the Board of Trade could find time to bring in a Measure to place undermanning in the category of unseaworthiness, he would find no one more willing or anxious to aid him in his effort than he would be—[*cheers*]—

or the shipowners of the country generally. [*Cheers.*] If the right hon. Gentleman thought proper to include in such a Measure a provision that no vessel should be deemed to be seaworthy unless a certificated officer were on watch, shipowners and those who signed the minority Report, said that that was a proper and wise precaution, and a security not only for the vessel itself, but for other vessels traversing the sea. They further said that while a manning scale was impossible, and could not be fairly carried into effect with the ever changing character of ships, yet there ought always to be on every foreign-going vessel, whatever its size, a proper and adequate watch, and the extent of that watch was set out in the Report of the Manning Committee. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to give to the Board of Trade power of detention, he for one would not have the slightest objection to it. But he did say that there was no industry in the country where it was attempted to lay down how many men should be employed and who those men should be, and so long as they provided on board a vessel a sufficient watch to secure it against danger, Parliament would have done all that was necessary as regarded the safety of life at sea in that ship. The whole of the Manning Committee recognised that the national bearing of the question as regarded a Reserve for the Royal Navy was a serious matter, and they came to the conclusion that the mercantile navy at present was not the same nursery for the Reserve of the Navy as it was in time gone by. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not see any system by which seamen for the Navy could be raised in the mercantile service to any extent, or men be found sufficient for the purpose other than that recommended by the Committee, viz., the establishment of training ships for the education of boys, who might, when they were not wanted in the Royal Navy, be drafted for service on board merchant vessels. After all, the mercantile marine, like all other industries, was carried on for commercial purposes. They were proud of their ships and of their enterprise, but yet they could not get away from the fact that the merchant shipping was a commercial undertaking. It was no more right to throw the burden of finding a reserve for the Navy on the mercantile marine than to throw the burden of finding a reserve for the army upon any shore employment. On this great question of manning the Navy he thought the country had very nearly reached the maximum number of men that could be drafted from the Mercantile Marine and relied upon or used in the Royal Navy. It was possible that stokers and other men of the same class might be found in larger numbers; but as to seamen with any education as such, he thought they had very nearly reached the extreme limit at which the Admiralty could find men in the merchant service as being proper men for the Royal Naval Reserve. Shipowners had for years been under the control of the Board of Trade more completely than any land industry, and if the House laid down hard and fast lines as to load-line or manning scale of crew, that personal responsibility and interest in the conduct of a business would be taken away which it was desirable should be preserved if that business was to succeed. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon), said that no more important question could be brought before the House than that of the Mercantile Marine, whether it was looked at from the point of view of the enormous importance of the trade, the great amount of capital invested in it, or the enormous influence it had on the general trade of the country; or whether it was looked at from the point of view of the safety and welfare of the vast number of seamen engaged, and with whom the public had the greatest sympathy in the dangers they had to encounter. But the House must be careful, while endeavouring to safeguard the interests and welfare of the sailor, it did not go to such extremes as would cripple a great industry. He could imagine that in the zeal of Parliament to protect the sailor a great injury might be inflicted on the trade in which the sailor was employed. The hon. Member for Middlesbro' spoke of the great loss of life at sea. No doubt the loss of life was very great, but it was not an increasing loss. He thought the loss might be described as of a stationary character, although the number of men employed in ships increased every year. The hon. Member said that in ten years the number of men lost at sea was 22,000. That number did not agree with the information which he received at the Board of Trade. Taking the years between 1884 and 1896 he found that the number of lives lost on board merchant vessels registered in the United Kingdom by wrecks or casualties amounted to 10,738.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I said killed and drowned.

MR. RITCHIE understood that the hon. Member quoted the figures as an illustration of the loss of life at sea in consequence of undermanning. [MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: "Exactly."] But the hon. Member could hardly reckon accidents which occurred other than by wrecks or casualties as being the result of undermanning.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I said that there were 22,000 lives lost at sea, killed and drowned. I did not say they were all owing to undermanning.

MR. RITCHIE said the only reason for quoting the figures was to show the consequences of the existing condition of what the hon. Member meant by undermanning. If he took the figures of seamen lost by wrecks or casualties, he thought he might fairly assume that that was the extreme limit of the number lost by undermanning.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: No, that is not so.

MR. RITCHIE: That is my opinion. On that basis, he found the number, instead of being 22,000 was 10,000. Of course, they would all be delighted if that number could be reduced; but, having regard to the enormous size of the Mercantile Marine, he should imagine the actual figures bore favourable comparison with the number of casualties in any mercantile marine in the world.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: That is not true. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. RITCHIE: But, however that might be, it was not the real question at issue. He was as desirous as the hon. Gentleman and his Friends were that everything that could reasonably be done ought to be done with the view of seeing whether the number of casualties could be reduced. The hon. Gentleman proposed that the Government should pass this Session a Bill to carry out the whole of the recommendations of the Committee. As the House knew, there were 42 separate recommendations by the Committee, dealing with a vast number of subjects, amongst others the training of boys, the rating of seamen, the crews, and the scale of manning. The scale of manning itself contained no fewer than 38 different rates in the scale—that was to say, the Government were to lay down on hard and fast lines in an Act of Parliament that vessels of a certain tonnage should have a certain number of hands whatever might be the appliances on the vessel, the nature of the voyage, or the conditions under which the voyage was carried out.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: That is all provided for.

MR. RITCHIE knew it was, and he only mentioned it as an illustration in order to show the nature of the task on which the hon. Gentleman invited the Government to embark. The Chairman of the Committee himself (Sir E. Reed), in an Amendment to the Report, rather quailed at the idea of asking Parliament to consider such a large number of recommendations and such a large and complex subject. That was an indication that, in the opinion of Sir E. Reed, if the Government could not afford time to deal with the whole subject, if they could not make up their mind to invite the House to consider such a complex scale as that laid down in the Report of the Committee, yet if they dealt with it in the way which was acceptable to the whole Committee—namely, to make undermanning a reason for detention, that would be to a very large extent a solution of the difficulty. The hon. Gentleman was not prepared to agree to that suggestion, but it might be assumed that in his regard for the safety of British seamen he would rather have some measure of that kind than no measure at all. ["Hear, hear" *by* Mr. H. WILSON.] With the business, however, which the Government thought it necessary to put before the House of Commons this Session, for them to add to the programme a Bill to carry out all the recommendations of the Select Committee would be to court miserable failure. It would be impossible for them to do anything of the kind. He must say that he was very much impressed with the absurdity of the present system by which, while a ship could be detained for almost a trifling defect in her construction, she could not be detained for going out with what the surveyor thought to be an insufficient crew. That was an absurd anomaly which ought to be remedied speedily. He had already had a Bill drawn to amend that state of things; and although at that moment he would not make pledges with regard to it, he believed that such a Bill could be passed in the present Session if it were acceptable to the great majority on both sides of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] That in itself would be a great advance in the direction desired by the hon. Member. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. AUGUSTUS WARR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) said that if the entire programme of the hon. Member for Middlesbro' were carried into effect, he should certainly, as a shipowner, make a careful examination of his position, and, if it were possible, retire from shipowning altogether. He should certainly despair of making a living out of it. He had heard with great pleasure the statement of the Board of Trade, and he gathered that there was good hope for supposing that the Government would attempt to carry into effect those recommendations of the Committee, about which there was agreement on all sides. The establishment of training ships to increase the number of men in the Mercantile Marine would have far-reaching consequences. It would tend to raise the level of the British seaman. If there were any doubt as to the power of the Board of Trade to detain vessels which were undermanned, and as to the liability of the shipowners for neglect in this respect, that doubt should be at once removed. Undermanning was a bad form of unseaworthiness. It was urged, however, that there must be a general manning scale if the Board of Trade were to exercise the proper supervision. But such a scale would work injustice between ship and ship by leaving the Board of Trade no discretion. The scale must be elastic, as Mr. Howard, in his evidence before the Committee, pointed out. He thought the Government would be wise not to enforce any statutory manning scale, but to content themselves with strengthening the powers of the Board of Trade. The undermanning which would justify detention could never be a question of real doubt to experts. The point should be decided by a consideration of the vessel, the cargo, the time of year, and the voyage, according to general rules to be laid down by the Board of Trade. Undermanning did undoubtedly exist in rare instances, and in those instances it should involve serious consequences to the shipowners concerned; but that should not be made the reason for the adoption of regulations which would press hardly upon shipowners who were conducting their business honourably. He trusted the Government would therefore hesitate before committing themselves to the adoption of a serious addition to the 748 sections which now constituted the code of merchant shipping. If that were done, shipowners would begin to regard the Board of Trade as existing, not in the true interest of shipping commerce, but as an elaborate contrivance for interfering with their business and disturbing their peace of mind. ["Hear, hear!"]

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said the only reason why he could not advise his hon. Friend the Member for Middlesbro' to accept the proposals of the President of the Board of Trade was that he did not see how it was possible to declare undermanning unseaworthiness without defining what undermanning was. If they determined that undermanning should be regarded as unseaworthiness, they should lay down some regulations as to what was undermanning. There were only two points of difference between the majority and the minority of the Committee. These points were whether they should have a fixed scale, and whether this scale would affect all the cases that had been cited. The proposals made by the majority, if carried out, would be effectual so far as the cases cited before the Committee were concerned. Take the case of the *Deeside.* The *Deeside* was run down, and lives were lost in consequence of the look-out man having been called away to trim lamps. There were only two men and an officer on board. One man was at the wheel, the other man was the look-out man, and the latter was called away from his post to trim lamps, with the result that the vessel was run down and lost. The suggestions of the minority, as well as the suggestions of the majority, would cover cases of ineffective watch, like the case of the *Deeside.* Then there was another class of case which would not be covered by the suggestions of the minority. Take the case of the *Inchgarvin.* The *Inchgarvin* twice ran ashore. In the first instance there was no inquiry. In the next instance there was an inquiry, and it was found that while the ship had seven able seamen, they were all foreigners, and unable to understand the orders given to them. It was necessary to see that the able seaman was, in the first place, a competent man, who was qualified as a seaman. But a medical man did not know anything at all about the qualification of the seaman. If in a case which had been referred to the medical man reported he may have been mistaken.

*SIR ARTHUR FORWOOD said that what he had said was that the Government had an emigration officer and a medical man, both of whom agreed as to the efficiency. The Government emigration officer was generally an expert man.

DR. CLARK said the emigrant was a passenger, and an emigration officer might be no more qualified than was a medical man to state whether these men were to be ordinary or able seamen. It was necessary, first, that the men should know their business, and secondly, that they should know the language in which orders were given. He commented on the fact that our sailing vessels, which were the nursery of our seamen in the past, were disappearing bit by bit, and yet the new steamers which were taking their place were not receiving apprentices in sufficient numbers. At the present time we had about ten million tons of steam vessels and three million tons of sailing vessels, and yet the last report showed that, while there were 3,719 apprentices in sailing vessels, there were only 133 in steam vessels. As to boys, the number in our sailing vessels was 1,100, while in steam vessels there were only about 700. Of ordinary seamen there were 5,100 in our sailing vessels, and 1,100 in our steamers. He did not understand the warmth of the speech of the right hon. Baronet opposite, as the hon. Member for Middlesbro' admitted that the great liners were well manned and fitted, and thoroughly seaworthy ["Hear, hear!"] It was only a few miserable tramps that required to be watched, and the only thing was that the liners, through competition with these undermanned tramps, must be compelled to economise.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON said that after the statement of the President of the Board of Trade as to the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill to declare undermanning to be unseaworthiness, although he did not go so far as he should have liked, he must, in the interests of the seamen, admit that it was a step in the right direction, and he begged leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."—Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS [AID GRANT].

Committee thereupon deferred till To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES).

Adjourned Debate on Motion for leave to bring in a Bill [21st January] further adjourned till To-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS [MONEY].

Committee thereupon deferred till To-morrow.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND).

Bill to enable Women to be elected and to act as County Councillors, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Munro Ferguson, Sir John Leng, and Mr. Haldane; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday 2nd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 80.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.

Bill to extend the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1886, to officers and servants of other Local Authorities, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wanklyn, Sir John Blundell Maple, Colonel Dalbiac, Mr. Atherley Jones, Mr. Bailey, and Captain Norton; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 81.]

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).

Bill to amend and extend the Law relating to the erection of Labourers' Cottages in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. William Redmond, and Mr. O'Kelly; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th February, and to be printed.—[Bil 182.].

SURVEYORS (COUNTY DUBLIN).

Bill to Amend the Law relating to the appointment of Surveyors for the county of Dublin, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Clancy and Mr. Horace Plunkett; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday 11th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 83.]

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND).

Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Public Health in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate, Mr. Balfour, and the Solicitor General for Scotland.

Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): Is the name of the Leader of the House on the back of this Bill?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, the right hon. Gentleman's name was given as one of those introducing the Bill. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*]

Bill presented and read the first time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday and to be printed.—[Bill 84.]

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 3rd February read, and discharged.—Bill withdrawn.

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 26th January 1897.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

JUDICATURE ACTS.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): To call attention to the unsatisfactory working of the Judicature Acts; and to move, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the Administration of Justice under the Judicature Acts, with a view to secure greater efficiency and economy.—[*Tuesday 23rd February.*]

NATIONAL MUSEUM (WALES).

Mr. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): To call attention to the desirability of establishing a National Museum in Wales and to move, That in the opinion of this House, it is necessary for the public good of the inhabitants of the Principality that a National Museum and Library should be established in Wales.—[*Tuesday 23rd February.*]

PEASANT FREEHOLDERS (WALES).

Mr. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): To call attention to the serious effects of the long period of agricultural depression, so far as it affects peasant freeholders in Wales; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday 23rd February.*]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ARREARS OF GRANTS).

Mr. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomery): To call attention to the refusal of the Education Department to pay arrears of Grants due to School Boards under Section 97 of the Act of 1870; and to move a Resolution.—[*Tuesday 23rd February.*]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ARREARS OF GRANTS).

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): To call attention to the refusal of the Education Department to pay Arrears of Grants due to School Boards under Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870; and to move a Resolution—[*Tuesday 23rd February.*]

QUESTIONS.

OTTOMAN PUBLIC DEBT.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) what portion of the Ottoman Public Debt is now borne by Greece in pursuance of Article X. of the Convention of 24th May 1881, which provided that Greece should bear a part of that debt proportionate to the revenues of the ceded territories transferred to her by the Convention from Turkey; (2) what steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government during the 15 years which have elapsed since the signature of that Convention, to procure the carrying out of the stipulation of Article X. that Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, and Russia should determine between their Representatives at Constantinople and the Sublime Porte, the portion of the debt to be borne by Greece; (3) what has been the result of those steps, if any; (4) whether Her Majesty's Government have received any representations from the Turkish Government on this subject since the signature of the Convention; and, if so, whether he can give the reference to any Blue-book in which such representations and the replies thereto may be found; and, (5) whether any recent Dispatch has been received by Her Majesty's Government on the subject?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. George Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): No contribution to the Ottoman Public Debt had been made by Greece, the quota to be paid by her never having been determined by the Powers. In answer to the Questions in paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5, I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member on the 21st, which related throughout to the case of Greece as well as to those of Bulgaria, Servia and Montenegro. The correspondence on the subject has not appeared in any Blue-book, and belonging as it does in the main to the year 1885, is now somewhat out of date.

RAMS OF WARSHIPS.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) whether, since the sinking by ramming of Her Majesty's ship *Victoria* by Her Majesty's ship *Camperdown*, the Admiralty have received reports of narrow escapes of Her Majesty's ships from being rammed by others of Her Majesty's ships, in consequence of slight accidents to machinery during manœuvres in close order, and, if not, whether they have reason to believe that such narrow escapes do take place; and (2) whether, in view of danger of ships being sunk or injured by the rams of their consorts, as in the case of the *Victoria* risk of loss both to the rammer and the rammed, and in view also of the increased range and efficiency attained in gun-fire, causing an increased probability of Naval actions being fought at considerable distances between the contending ships, the Admiralty will take into reconsideration the desirability of continuing to fit Her Majesty's ships with rams projecting 20 feet below water, and so fitted as to be incapable of resisting any great twisting strain?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Admiralty have received no reports of narrow escapes of Her Majesty's ships from being rammed by others of Her Majesty's ships, in consequence of slight accidents to machinery during manœuvres in close order. As to the second Question the hon. Member is in error. None of Her Majesty's ships have "rams 20 feet below the water," and therefore the remainder of his question falls to the ground.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked if the right hon. Gentleman had any reason to believe that there had been any narrow escapes?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY said he had no reason to believe there had been any narrow escapes as suggested in the question.

ADMIRALTY CHARTS.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Admiralty will consider the possibility and the advisability of engraving on the appropriate Admiralty charts a typical series of accurately drawn great circle routes from which any other great circle routes between any two points might be plotted out in accordance with the system suggested by Mr. H. M. Taylor, of Trinity College, Cambridge?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY: This question has already been considered and decided in the negative. The advantages conferred would not compensate for the inconvenience of a mass of lines crossing the chart, and the required information for routes where it is of most service is already given on the Admiralty track charts.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the great increase of alien immigration for sojourn in this country in 1896, amounting to 45,875 persons at eastern ports; and, if, in view of the facts, Her Majesty's Government propose to re-introduce the measure brought forward by Lord Salisbury in the last Parliament, or deal otherwise with the matter?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): The figures of 45,875 persons quoted by the hon. Member is not the number of aliens arriving in this country for sojourn, but the number arriving from European ports, who are not stated to be *en route* to America. Having regard to the amount of business to which the Government are already committed, I am afraid I cannot hold out a hope of the Bill referred to being introduced during this Session.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a large number of these aliens consist of sailors, and that the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, as president of the Shipmasters Society, has called attention to the great national danger?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order! that does not arise out of the question on the Paper.

HOWELL'S CHARITY.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Council what are the reasons for the delay in dealing with the scheme for the Denbighshire portion of Howell's Charity?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): The delay is caused by its appearing doubtful whether what is called the Denbighshire portion of the Charity does not belong to all Wales outside Glamorganshire.

TRADE SPIRITS.

*SIR **CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when the Return as to the Trade Spirits imported into the British Colonies and Protectorates in Africa in the five years ending with 1894, which was ordered on 26th August, 1895, will be presented to the House; and whether, with that Return, any later information can be furnished?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Return is in hand, and I hope to present it very shortly.

VACCINATION
(ROYAL COMMISSION REPORT).

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if the Government propose this Session to introduce any legislation on the lines of the Report of the Royal Commission on Vaccination?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I can only give the same answer as was given by me to the hon. Member for the Harborough Division, on Thursday last, and state that the Report of the Royal Commission on Vaccination is receiving the consideration of the Local Government Board.

MR. BAYLEY asked whether the hon. Gentleman could inform the House what the Local Government Board were proposing to do with regard to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Vaccination as to repeated convictions?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said the policy of the Local Government Board as regarded the question of repeated convictions was duly expressed in a letter to the Evesham Guardians in 1875. The letter was a long, one and he would be happy to give the hon. Gentleman a copy.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked whether the hon. Gentleman would lay on the Table Dr. Thorne's Report as to the methods of vaccination pursued on the Continent?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that he would be glad to consider the matter. Dr. Thorne had just hurriedly returned from the Continent, and he did not know whether the papers were yet in a fit state to be laid on the Table.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
(PARLIAMENTARY GRANT).

MR. A. K. LOYD (Berks, Abingdon): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been called to the fact that the managers of Public Elementary Schools are frequently obliged, before the Annual Parliamentary Grant is paid, to have recourse to an overdraft at their bankers, and to suffer a loss of the interest charged for such accommodation; and whether the Education Department will, in order to prevent such loss, arrange for a quarterly or half-yearly payment on account to such schools, in anticipation of the Annual Parliamentary Grant, upon such terms and conditions as the Department may in each case consider necessary?

SIR JOHN GORST: The Committee of Council would have no objection to make to the arrangement suggested by the hon. Member; but I understand that the financial difficulties which it would involve are at present insuperable.

FOUNDRY WORKERS.

MR. JAMES McKILLOP (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, seeing it often occurs that young persons under 16 years of age are transferred under the Factory Acts from one foundry to another in which their employment will be identical in all material respects, whether some arrangements could be made whereby the certificate of fitness already granted, and cost paid for occupation in the first factory, may equally be applicable to the like occupation elsewhere in the same district?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The arrangement suggested by the hon. Member is impossible without further legislation. If such legislation were proposed, I could only consider the question as affecting all industries and districts alike, and the practical difficulties involved would be such that I cannot see my way to promise any reversal of the decision arrived at by Parliament in 1878.

SOLICITORS' LICENCE DUTY (IRELAND).

MR. F. A. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if, on the introduction of the Budget, having regard to the decline of legal business in Ireland and the non-necessity for the tax, he will consider the question of remitting the licence duty made annually payable by solicitors in Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am sorry to learn that the legal business has declined in Ireland. I thought that that profession at any rate was flourishing. [*Laughter.*] I had the matter of the duty on solicitors under my consideration last year, and I made a proposal to the House with regard to it, which was not very favourably received. I am afraid I cannot promise that I shall be able to do anything in the matter.

LEE METFORD RIFLES (BISLEY MEETING).

MR. ROBERT WALLACE (Perth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that in the chief events at the National Rifle Meeting at Bisley this year the Lee-Metford rifle is to be used, and that there are only two or three rifle ranges in Scotland suitable for practice with this rifle, the War Office will, in order that Scottish Volunteers may compete on equal terms with other Volunteers, afford facilities for Scottish Volunteers to practise with the new rifle on the Government ranges or otherwise?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Until longer ranges can be established it is to be feared that the introduction of the Lee-Metford rifle will cause difficulty in many localities throughout Great Britain; but, after providing for the necessary shooting by the Regular Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers, the General Officers Commanding Districts will do all they can to facilitate practice by individual Volunteers and every effort will be made to minimise the inconvenience.

COAL SHIPMENTS.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will give for the year 1896 a Return showing the Foreign export of coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each country abroad, and also showing the quantity of coal shipped at each port for ships' use during the same period?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir, if the hon. Member moves for this Return, I shall be happy to grant it.

TRADE WITH BRITISH COLONIES.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has received satisfactory replies to the Circular Dispatch issued on his assuming office to Colonial Governments as to the best means of developing trade between the Mother Country and the Colonies, and if the suggestions contained in such replies will be published as soon as practicable for the information of the producing industries of the British Empire?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The replies to my Circular Dispatch of 28th November 1895, are not yet quite complete. As soon as they are, I hope to lay them on the Table of the House. I think the hon. Member will find that they contain a great deal of interesting and suggestive matter.

NAVAL COLLEGE (DARTMOUTH).

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any plans have been prepared for the New Naval College at Dartmouth; and if so, by whom; whether the same have been or will be submitted to the Captain of H.M.S. *Britannia* for criticism before being approved; whether any eminent architects have been or will be invited to submit plans for the building; and whether a fair premium or prize will be offered for the best design, so as to insure that Her Majesty's Naval Service shall be provided with a college worthy of its traditions and its fame?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The merest sketch plans have only so far been put forward, and they are entirely tentative. No decision as to the choice of an architect has yet been taken, but the Board will not take action without the most able professional assistance which they can secure.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS (BOURNAE, COUNTY TIPPERARY).

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether complaints have reached the Department in regard to the unsatisfactory character of the postal arrangements at Bournea, county Tipperary; whether he is aware that this is the only populous parish in the Roscrea district deprived of a Sunday post, and an afternoon collection on week days; and whether early steps will be taken to supply these defects?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): Application was received by the Department some months ago for an afternoon collection of letters at Bournea on weekdays, and for a Sunday delivery of letters. The request for the afternoon collection was refused on the ground that the revenue produced by the post by which Bournea is served was insufficient to cover the additional expenditure involved. With regard to the Sunday delivery, the applicant was informed that in accordance with regulations of long standing, a Sunday post is not established or withdrawn in rural districts, except in compliance with the wishes of persons receiving at least two-thirds of the correspondence. A memorial has since been received, and the matter is now under inquiry. The result shall be communicated to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

"COSTA RICA" PACKET CASE.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at what stage the international arbitration in the case of *Costa Rica* packet has now arrived?

MR. CURZON: The cases on both sides have been completed and laid before the arbitrator, who is now considering his decision.

STREET PREACHING IN SLIGO.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) what expense has been incurred in sending extra police from Dublin to Sligo with street preachers; (2) can he state from what source the expenses of those police are to be met; and (3), is he aware that the Sligo Corporation have resolved to resist the imposition and exaction of any tax to meet the expenses of the extra police, and that the County Sligo Grand Jury have no power since the passing of the Sligo Borough Improvement Act, 1869, to assess or levy a tax upon the borough of Sligo for such a purpose?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The total expense entailed in dispatching police from Dublin to Sligo on occasions of open-air preaching has been £1,213 13s. 9d. The expenses have been defrayed out of the Constabulary Vote, but claims have been, or will be made, for repayment from local rates of a portion of this sum, amounting to £206 16s. 9d. I am not aware that the Sligo Corporation have resolved to resist the imposition and exaction of any tax to meet the expenses of the extra police necessary for the maintenance of public order. I am advised that the rate can be levied either by the Corporation, or, in their default, by the Grand Jury.

MR. BERNARD COLLERY (Sligo, N.), asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the police were sent to

Sligo in opposition to the express wish of all sections of the community?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That is possible; but it is the absolute duty of the Government to maintain law and order, and law and order could not be maintained without the dispatch of these extra police.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Is it any part of the duty of the Government to see that psalm-singing is carried on in Sligo?

[No answer was given.]

RIVER SUCK DRAINAGE.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland whether his attention has been called to a meeting, held in last December, of tenants and owners of land at Ballygar, county Galway, to protest against the tax imposed upon them in consequence of the expenditure incurred in connection with the drainage of the River Suck, which in several cases amounts to more than the letting value of the land; and whether he will take such action as will relieve the people of that district of a tax that they are unable to pay, and thereby allow them to remain in possession of their holdings?

MR. HANBURY said he answered an exactly similar question yesterday, and he should be glad to tell the hon. Member what his answer was then.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland do the Government intend to bring in a Bill this Session to extend the municipal franchise in Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am quite prepared to admit that this is a matter that must be dealt with some time or another, but the Government cannot promise to introduce a Bill this Session for the purpose.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In the event of a Bill being introduced in other quarters will the right hon. Gentleman give it any benevolent help?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I could not answer that question without consultation with my colleagues.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether any such Bill was likely to be brought in by the Government before the present century expired?

[No answer was given.]

JURY SERVICE (YEOMANRY OFFICERS).

MR. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanark, S.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is the case that Officers of Yeomanry Regiments are exempt from serving on juries in England, but are not exempt in Scotland; and, if so, whether the exemption can be extended to Scotland?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The reply to the first part of my hon. Friend's Question is that Yeomanry Officers on full pay in England are exempt from serving on juries, and in Scotland are not exempt. The reply to the second part of the Question is that the exemption rests on a statute applying to England only, and could not be extended to Scotland without new legislation.

NAVAL EXAMINING BOARDS.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he has given attention to the composition of the Boards who conduct the examination in seamanship on passing for the rank of Lientenant, which Boards, being composed of Captains who happen to be available on the spot, are of varying composition in regard to the ability and temperament of their members and the standard of efficiency adopted by them; whether he is aware that the examinations conducted by these Boards vary greatly in the time given by them; that they vary still more greatly in the number and severity of the questions which the candidates are required to answer: that they vary infinitely in their standards of proficiency; and that the results of these examinations are consequently unequal as between one set of candidates and another; whether, in view of the fact that upon the results of these examinations all an officer's future largely depends, he will consider whether some alteration in the system can be adopted whereby the element of chance which enters into these examinations may be eliminated from them; and whether he sees any objection to adopting a system whereby the examination in seamanship should be conducted for each batch of candidates by a single Board, having fixed methods of examination and a single standard of proficiency, as is now the case with the subsequent examinations in navigation, pilotage, gunnery, and torpedo?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: I must ask my hon. Friend to allow me to give a general answer to his various questions. I propose to appoint a small Committee of officers of experience to consider the general subject of the instruction and education of young officers afloat after they have left the *Britannia* and have been appointed to sea-going ships. A part of the reference to the Committee will be the consideration of the subsequent examination held to ascertain the proficiency at which these young officers have arrived, and into the expediency or otherwise of any changes being introduced. I may add, however, for my hon. Friend's information, that the question of the examination in seamanship was fully considered by a Committee in 1886; and in the following year various changes were introduced. The establishment of a permanent Board of Examiners was, however, not thought to possess advantages calculated to outweigh the disadvantages.

CONSULAR COURT AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any, and if so, what steps to inquire into the charges made over a year ago against officials in connection with the Consular Court at Constantinople; whether a special judge has been appointed to go out to Constantinople to try certain matters arising in that Court in place of the ordinary judge; and if so, when he was so appointed; and, whether he has yet arrived at Constantinople, or when he will arrive?

MR. CURZON: The charges referred to in the question are involved in certain actions now pending in the Supreme Consular Court at Constantinople. As the judge of the Supreme Consular Court is himself a defendant in one of those actions, and as his judicial proceedings may be indirectly involved in the other, it was considered advisable to appoint a special judge to proceed to Constantinople to adjudicate on those matters. For this purpose it was necessary to pass a special Order in Council, under the provisions of which Sir Richard Rennie, late the Chief Justice of Her Majesty's Supreme Court for China and Japan, has been appointed. He has not yet arrived at Constantinople, as the actions in question are not ready for hearing, but he will proceed thither as soon as his services are required.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS (SOUTH LEITRIM).

MR. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that great inconvenience has been felt by the large number of people residing in the district between Johnston's Bridge and Lough Rynn, in South Leitrim, owing to there being no postal service between Johnston's Bridge and Lough Rynn sub-office to Dromod, a distance of eight or nine miles; and whether he is prepared to inquire as to the advisability of having a postal service established from Johnston's Bridge through Tooman, and returning by Cloncarn?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has received no application for the establishment of a Post through the district between Johnston's Bridge and Lough Rynn. Instructions have been given, however, for a Return to be taken of the amount of correspondence which would be benefited by the establishment of such a Post, and as soon as a report has been received the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

MULLINGAR UNION (MEDICINE CONTRACT).

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain why the Local Government Board adopted the unusual course of cancelling the medicine contract in Mullingar Union, seeing that the tenders were accepted by the Board of Guardians in the manner prescribed by them, and the accounts checked by the union officials responsible for their correctness?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: An Inquiry on oath was held in June last by the Local Government Board respecting the medicine supply of the Mullingar Union, and the Board, on a careful consideration of all the facts adduced at the Inquiry, came to the conclusion that the contractor ought not to be intrusted with the supply of medicines, and they accordingly requested the Guardians to terminate the contract. This the Guardians unanimously decided to do. It appeared from the evidence given at the Inquiry, amongst other things, that the prices in the accepted tender of articles most in use were largely in excess of those in the other tenders, and that the prices charged for extra medicines not on the authorised list, which the contractor on the terms of the bond was bound to supply at current wholesale prices, were largely in excess of what they should have been, the Guardians having accepted a list of prices furnished by the contractor purporting to be wholesale prices.

EMIGRANTS' INFORMATION OFFICE.

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the recommendations of the Committee that reported on the re-organisation of the Emigrants' Information Office have been carried into effect; have more suitable premises for the work of the office been secured; and whether more effective measures can be taken to prevent as far as possible intending young colonists being victimised by fraudulent agencies both at home and abroad.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Treasury have agreed to ask Parliament for an increase of the annual grant for this service from £1,000 to £1,500. Some of the recommendations of the Committee are already being carried into effect, and others will be when the increased grant becomes available in the new financial year. Pending the finding of more suitable premises, the present ones have not as yet been given up; but in the meantime the Office of Works have been authorised to lend a suitable room for the holding of meetings of the Committee. The last subject referred to by the hon. Member has been, and still is, occupying the attention of the Board of Trade, the High Commissioner for Canada, and the Colonial Office; but it is not easy to see what can be done beyond issuing warning notices, which is constantly being done by the Emigrants' Information Office. I would also call attention to the report recently issued by the Foreign Office of Consul General Warburton's on the "Distress caused to British Emigrants to California by fraudulent Land Syndicates and Emigration Agencies."

DISTRESS (WESTERN DONEGAL).

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether, in view of the distress prevailing in many districts of Western Donegal, he will say when the commencement of the works of the promised light railways in that part of the country may be expected; and (2) whether any other public works, such as the improvement of piers and landing-places on the coast, are likely to be speedily undertaken by the Government?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The condition of the small occupiers in Western Donegal has formed the subject of careful investigation by the Local Government Board, and the result of the inquiries made is that it is not considered necessary to adopt exceptional measures for their relief. With regard to light railways I am not in a position at present to make any statement on the subject. It is not correct to say that a promise has been given to undertake railway works in this part of Donegal. As to the second paragraph, I understand that the Congested Districts Board are completing the erection of a pier at Tory Island, and also the extension of a pier at Burton Port. No additional works of this character are in immediate contemplation by the Government.

WATERFORD BACON TRADE DISPUTE.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been directed to a number of pictures drawn from photographs which are published in the *Irish Weekly Independent* of the 23rd instant, and which represent a large armed force of Royal Irish Constabulary conducting pigs through the streets of

Waterford to the place of slaughter; what number of police have been so engaged since the strike in the bacon trade in Waterford began, and what is the cost of the men so engaged; (2) whether he intends to allow the police to be continued at this duty; and, (3) if so, whether the bacon merchants whom the police are serving will be charged with the cost, or any portion of it?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member has been good enough to send me a copy of the newspaper referred to. The duty of the police in this matter is not that of conducting pigs through the streets, but of protecting the drovers from apprehended acts of violence, and of preserving the public peace. Owing to the short notice that has been given of the question, I am not in a position at the present moment to reply definitely to the second paragraph. About 150 police, however, have been drafted into Waterford in connection with the bacon trade dispute there, and their cost approximately would be about £28 per diem. It is not the desire of the Government to take sides in an industrial dispute, but it cannot stand by and permit the coercion by intimidation and other illegal means of persons engaged in the pursuit of their lawful business. The police will be employed on this duty so long as the necessity for their employment continues. There is no power to charge to any particular section of the inhabitants of Waterford the cost of the police so employed.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN said that arising out of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government did not wish to take sides, he desired to ask him whether he was aware that Inspector Whelan, who had charge of the police, was in the habit of dining with Messrs. Denny and Richardson and then coming into the streets and ordering baton charges—[*Nationalist cries of* "Hear, hear"]; whether the right hon. Gentleman did not think that that that was taking sides; and whether he would see that this inspector was removed and an officer placed in charge of the police who would have the decency to act impartially? [*Nationalist cheers.*]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is going beyond the limits of a question.

EXCHANGE COMPENSATION (INDIA).

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the various questions of Exchange Compensation, particularly in relation to officers whose salaries are regulated by statute, and questions arising from domicile; and, if so, whether he can state the decision arrived at, or will agree to present the correspondence on the subject?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The subject of Exchange Compensation has been for some time past under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council. We have made some progress towards settling some of the questions involved; but there are others of a very complicated and far-reaching character still to be considered. I hope that a general decision will be given before long.

PORT PRECAUTIONS AGAINST DISEASE.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the inequality of the burden imposed on the outports for the expense of measures necessitated by the Government regulations for protection of the entire area of the United Kingdom against cholera, yellow fever, and plague, the Government will consider the advisability of contributing towards such expense out of Imperial funds?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, who answered the Question, said: I have not had an opportunity of conferring with my hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board on this matter, and I am not aware whether any fresh circumstances have arisen with regard to it. But I may say that last year I received a large deputation on the subject, and after communicating with the Local Government Board, I was obliged to inform the deputation that Her Majesty's Government saw no sufficient reason for altering the decision that had been arrived at by previous Governments, or for relieving the outports from the duty that had always been incumbent on them of preventing, at an expense by no means large, the introduction of these diseases into the country.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies (1) whether it is true that the Governor of Malta, after first imposing a 20 days' quarantine, has since issued a total prohibition on all vessels, however healthy they may be, arriving from India; and (2) whether, seeing that this country, which is in unceasing communication with Indian ports, finds it sufficient to rely for the purposes of plague on the systems of inspection and isolation, which were so successfully tested both during the European cholera invasion of 1892-4, and recently again in the case of the *Nubia* at Plymouth, he will take such steps as will secure the adoption by our Crown Colonies in the Mediterranean of those more scientific and less inconvenient methods to prevent the introduction and spread of foreign diseases?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative. As to the second paragraph, my predecessors and I have continually urged the Government of Malta to adopt the more scientific and convenient methods of preventing the introduction and spread of foreign diseases instead of the stringent system of quarantine hitherto in use; but partly from the supposed necessity of conforming to the practice of Italy; and partly from the inveterate belief of the population of Malta in the necessity of the strictest quarantine, which might lead to disturbance if the rules were relaxed, we have not as yet succeeded in effecting the change. I am now in correspondence with the Governor, and have pointed out to the colonial Government the serious injury which is being inflicted, not only on commerce but on the interest of Malta by the action of the Government, and I shall be glad if my remonstrances may induce them to adopt a more reasonable course.

INDIAN FAMINE (SALE OF SILVER.)

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, as the Indian peasantry will be compelled by the famine to sell their hoards of silver at a heavy loss through the mints being closed and the depreciation of silver bullion, it will be possible to make arrangements at the Government treasuries in the famine districts for the purchase of silver ornaments at a fixed price per ounce?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The form of relief suggested in my hon. Friend's question is not one that I am prepared to recommend to the Government of India, for, amongst other disadvantages, it is open to this practical difficulty, that, if it were once known that the Government would purchase silver ornaments at a price above their market value, those who would derive most benefit from this philanthropic venture would be well-to-do persons who could purchase silver ornaments wholesale. I may add that, although the divergence between the exchange value in gold of a coined rupee and that of an equal quantity of uncoined silver has undoubtedly increased since the mints were closed, it does not follow that the purchasing power of silver bullion in India has fallen.

IRISH MAILS.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will afford the Irish Mails Committee an opportunity of examining the time table before the contract is finally approved of by the Postmaster General?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General will be happy to give the Irish Mails Committee an opportunity of examining in detail the time table which has now been fixed and of receiving personal explanation upon it, but it is desirable that any meeting for the purpose should take place without delay, as negotiations for the improvement of the service in Ireland are necessarily contingent on the service between London and Dublin, and have already been postponed too long.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in the event of the strengthening of the Navy, it is intended to utilise the services of the chief engine-room artificers on pension, and holding Board of Trade certificates of competency, as assistant engineers in the Naval Reserve?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The Admiralty already possess the necessary powers for employing all pensioners in time of war, and it is not contemplated to make any special provision for the employment of pensioned chief engine-room artificers as assistant engineers in the Naval Reserve.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that the strength of the Royal Naval Reserve, exclusive of 1,561 officers, in 1895–6, was 23,740 men, he intends at an early date to make proposals to increase that reserve to a number more nearly approaching the reserve of seamen ready in case of emergencies to man the fleets of several European Powers?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: Without going into the figures of the hon. Member, I may say that I cannot anticipate the statement which it will be my duty to make when introducing the Navy Estimates for the coming financial year.

TRANSIT OF CATTLE BY SEA.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will appoint a Commission to inquire into and report upon the best methods of improving the breeds of cattle, sheep, and pigs in Ireland, and also of improving and cheapening the transit of live stock by land and sea?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As at present advised, the Government do not see any necessity for appointing a Commission for the purposes stated in the hon. Member's Question. With regard to the transit of live stock, I would remind the hon. Member that the matter formed the subject of inquiry by a Departmental Committee appointed in 1894 by the Board of Agriculture, and that Orders have since been made both in this country and in Ireland, giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee.

TREASON-FELONY PRISONERS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state what is the mental and bodily conditions of Fetherstone and Flanagan, who are still in Portland?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The health, bodily and mental, of both these convicts, according to the reports which I received last July and again in December, is good and not likely to be injured by continued imprisonment.

TOWN TENANTS (IRELAND).

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he considered the representations made to him by a deputation asking that the grievances of town tenants in Ireland should be remedied; and whether he will introduce a Bill to amend the existing law?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have no reason to believe that the representation made to me by the deputation in question referred to a grievance confined to Ireland. The Government cannot undertake to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject, and I thought I had already made this plain to the hon. Member.

MAURITIUS POLICE.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the fact that the pay of the European police in the Mauritius is 40 rupees a month, which at the present rate of exchange is about £2 7s. 9d., while the European soldier is paid at the rate of 2s. to the rupee; and whether he will take steps in the interests of efficiency to grant the police an equally favourable rate for home remittances, for at least half their salary, as a compensation allowance?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: There are no distinct European police in Mauritius. The officers and men of the police force who are Europaans are paid in the currency of the Colony, and I am not aware of any reason for treating them more favourably in the matter of remittances to England than other Europeans in the service of the Colony.

MADRAS INFANTRY REGIMENTS.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State of India whether, with reference to the under officering of Madras infantry regiments, to which his attention was called last Session, he has caused inquiries to be made into the cause of the constant depletion of Madras regiments by transfer of Officers, and its effects on the efficiency and morale of the Corps, and the best way of providing a remedy; and what, if any, explanations have been offered or steps taken in the matter?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I have been, and am still, in communication with the Government of India on the questions raised by my hon. Friend, and the Government are looking into the matter, though I have not yet received any full report on the subject from them. I may say, however, that there is no reason to suppose that the circumstances of Madras regiments in respect of officers differ in any way from those of Bengal and Bombay regiments.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary in the cities of Londonderry, Cork, Waterford, and Belfast, have numbers on their uniforms, he will explain what reason there is against the wearing of numbers by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary both in the cities and the country with a view to their identification as a security against crime and outrage?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member has raised this question on previous occasions in the House, and I have nothing to add to the explanations repeatedly given, both by myself and by my predecessors. I must, however, enter an emphatic protest against the last words of the question as conveying an imputation wholly undeserved and unwarranted against a most exemplary body of men. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. MACNEILL: I beg to give notice that I shall bring forward this question on the Estimates, and that I shall deal with it at a generous and reasonable length. [*Laughter.*]

POST OFFICE FEMALE CLERKS (DUBLIN).

Mr. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin, Co. N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, with reference to his statement on 19th May last year, that lower salaries are paid to women clerks in the General Post Office, Dublin, than to those in the London Post Office because of the higher cost of living in London, whether it is a fact that, despite that alleged circumstance, the male clerks are paid at the same rates in both offices: and, if so, whether the Postmaster General will reconsider his decision in this matter, and place the female clerks as well as the male clerks in both offices in the same position as regards salary?

Mr. HANBURY: Male clerks of the second division in the General Post Office, Dublin, are paid at the same rates of salary as those in the General Post Office, London, because these rates are not subject to any Departmental arrangement, but are applicable to second division clerks generally by Order in Council. But other male officials are paid less in Dublin and Edinburgh on account of the lower cost of living. The female clerks are treated in this respect upon precisely the same principle as the male officials, other than the second division.

NAVAL PENSIONS.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) will he explain why, out of the 6,028 seamen who were discharged from Her Majesty's Fleet in 1895–6, only 1,372 received pensions; (2) what was the average service of those not pensioned in that period, and their average age; and (3) what were the respective numbers of those pensioned and not pensioned, who left the Navy in 1895–6, who joined the Royal Naval Reserve?

Mr. MACARTNEY: The answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's Question is that only those seamen discharged from the fleet in 1895–6 received pensions who were entitled to them according to the regulations. To answer the second paragraph would involve a prolonged and laborious search through the registers, for which there would be no compensating advantage to the public service. As regards the third paragraph, I am unable to say how many of the men who left the Navy in 1895–96 joined the Royal Naval Reserve, but 86 men who had at one time or other served in the Navy joined the Reserve in that year.

BELLEVILLE BOILERS (ROYAL NAVY).

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the total amount of royalty paid for the use of Belleville boilers in H.M.S. *Powerful* and *Terrible*; to whom was the money paid; and have the contractors for these ships handed in a bill for extras due to alterations made after the contracts were signed; if so, what are the respective amounts?

MR. MACARTNEY: The total amount of royalty due to Messrs. Delaunay, Belleville and Co., the owners of the patents, amounts to £5,250 for each ship, of which £4,383 (including £83 for drawings) has been paid to this firm for each ship to the present date. Certain extra works and alterations outside the original contracts have been undertaken by the contractors, and in accordance with the terms of the contracts and the usual practice, the cost of these items has been agreed upon and approved by the Admiralty. I am not prepared to state the amounts so paid.

NAVAL REPAIRS (H.M.S. "BLACK PRINCE.")

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the remainder of the work necessary to complete the repairs of Her Majesty's ship *Black Prince* will be carried out at Haulbowline?

MR. MACARTNEY: Further alterations and repairs to the *Black Prince* beyond those provided for in the original contract with the Passage Dock Company, are now under consideration, and such of them as are decided upon will be carried out at Haulbowline.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS INQUIRY (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.)

SIR W. DUNN (Paisley): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dumfries Burghs (SIR ROBERT REID), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Royal Commission to be appointed upon Financial Relations is to be confined to the case of Ireland, or will be able to deal with the financial relations of other parts of the United Kingdom?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have to say that the same question identically was asked me by the Member for the Stirling Burghs on January 21, and I stated then that I could make no answer on the subject until I was in a position to state to the House what the terms of reference were.

MR. J. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman give an undertaking to the House that before any steps are taken towards the appointment of the new Royal Commission, the day and the opportunity promised for the discussion of the whole subject will be given?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The hon. Gentleman means before the actual appointment?

MR. DILLON: Yes.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, I think there will be no objection to that.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will give an opportunity for discussing the appointment of the Commission?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: There will be no opportunity of discussing the appointment of the Royal Commission.

MR. CLANCY: I did not mean that. I meant the discussion of the general question, and when?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I cannot say that, but I shall be able to state that early next week—possibly before.

DR. R. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, if we are not satisfied with the verdict of the new Royal Commission, we shall have the power to appoint another Royal Commission? ["Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Certainly—if the hon. Gentleman is in office at the time. [*Loud Laughter and cheers.*]

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN: May I ask the Leader of the House whether he can now say when he proposes to take the motion for the appointment of the South African Committee?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No, Sir, I cannot state definitely at the present moment when that will be taken, but I think I shall probably be in a position before the House rises to-night to make some statement with regard to public business. I confess I hope that we shall finish the Debate on the Address either to-night or to-morrow, and in that event I shall know before 12 o'clock to-night. Of course I shall make a statement with regard to Government time for the rest of the week. Of course, if the Debate concludes to-night, as I hope it will, to-morrow will be a private Members' day, and will not be under the control of the Government.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.): I understand the right hon. Gentleman had said previously that the Committee would be moved practically as soon as the Debate on the Address is over.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: We do not propose to have any undue delay, but I should not like to give a definite pledge as to that.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In the event of the Debate on the Address and the South African Committee being concluded this week, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any day in his mind for taking the Debate on the financial relations question?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No, Sir. The Education Bill ought to be introduced as soon as possible, but of course, with regard to the financial relations Debate, I am aware that hon. Gentlemen in the Irish quarter of the House naturally take a special interest in it, and I shall be glad to do all I can to meet their convenience.

MOTIONS.

GROCERS' CERTIFICATES (SCOTLAND) ABOLITION.

Bill to abolish Dealers' or Grocers' Certificates in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Leng, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. Crombie, and Mr. Dalziel; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 14th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 85.]

Mr. J. M. Maclean.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS) AMENDMENTS.

Bill to amend the Law with regard to compensation due to persons injured in pursuit of their employment, or otherwise, where the action would lie against a Foreign Shipowner, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harold Reckitt, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Darling, Mr. Wolff, Mr. William Allan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and Mr. John Burns; presented, and Read the first time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday 9th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 86.]

OLD AGE PROVIDENT PENSIONS.

Bill to provide Pensions in Old Age to the Provident Poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bartley, Mr. Maclean, and Sir Frederick Seager Hunt; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 87.]

OUTDOOR PROVIDENT RELIEF.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Outdoor Relief in sickness and widowhood to the Provident Poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bartley, Mr. Maclean, and Sir Frederick Seager Hunt; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 88.]

PARISH REGISTERS.

Bill for the better preservation of Parish Registers in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macdona, Sir Henry Howarth, Mr. Jebb, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Birrell, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr Griffith-Boscawen; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 89.]

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION.

Bill to make more effectual provision for Prevention of the Pollution of Rivers and Streams, ordered to be brought in by Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Wyvill, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Sir Henry Howorth, Dr. Farquharson, Sir John Brunner, Mr. Kenrick, and Mr. Brigg; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday, and to be printed.—[Bill 90.]

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT (IRELAND) ACT (1885) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Educational Endowments in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Hammond, and Mr. Knox; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday, and to be printed.—[Bill 91.]

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND).

Bill to provide for the Superannuation of Poor Law Officers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Clancy, Mr. Horace Plunkett, Mr. Harrington, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Field, Mr. Collery, Mr. Wolff, and Dr. Robert Ambrose; presented and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday 11th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 92.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.—SIXTH DAY.]

Ordered,—that the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address, in answer to Her Majesty's Speech, have precedence this day of the Notices of Motions, and to-morrow of the other Orders of the Day.—(*First Lord of the Treasury.*)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [19th January], "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, as followeth:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Viscount Folkestone.*)

Question again proposed,—Debate resumed.

INDIAN FAMINE.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire) proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words:—

"And we humbly pray that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to direct that a full and independent Inquiry shall forthwith be made into the condition of the masses of the Indian people, with a view to ascertain the causes by reason of which they are helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence."

He said he was sure India would feel grateful for the expressions of sympathy contained in the Queen's Speech, and for the assurances that the State would do all in its power to save life. But he felt it his duty to move his Amendment because the Government did not seem fully to realise the nature and magnitude of the calamity. The methods of State relief adopted sought to mitigate the outward symptoms, but they did not tend to remove the cause of the evil, which was the extreme poverty of the masses. So far from removing this evil, the expenditure on famine relief aggravated it. He did not know how much would be spent, whether three millions, or six millions, or three times six millions. But where would this money come from? It would not come down from the clouds. It would have to be raised by the taxation of the masses; the dying would be fed at the expense of the hungry survivors, making the survivors more destitute, more heavily burdened, and less able to resist hunger and disease. Also he felt it his duty to place prominently before the House the Indian view of the calamity and its proper remedies. These remedies were not heroic ones, but they proceeded from an intimate knowledge of the condition and habits of the people. If it were asked from what sources Indian public opinion could be learnt, he would say, from his friend Mr. Naoroji, who was both a trusted representative of his Indian fellow countrymen and a true well wisher of British rule; from the Indian Press, and from the resolutions of the Indian National Congress, which gave voice to public feeling in India. The view held in India with regard to the famine might be briefly expressed in three simple propositions. The first was, that the excessive mortality in times of famine was owing to the chronic destitution of the masses, who existed precariously on the verge of subsistence. He hoped that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India would not deny the truth of this proposition. It was true that in the Queen's Speech the cause of the famine was declared to be the "failure of the autumn rains," but he assumed that was only stated as the immediate cause, the last straw which broke the camel's back, and that the noble Lord looked further back for the causes of the ryot's feeble powers of resistance. How, indeed, could the proposition be denied? For it stood to reason that the population must be living from hand to mouth if, on account of the failure of one harvest, they died of hunger, not by hundreds and thousands, but by hundreds of thousands and millions. If, however, the extreme destitution of the people was denied, he trusted that the House would call for inquiry and insist on this issue being fairly tried, as between official optimism on the one hand and unanimous Indian public opinion on the other. His second proposition was, that mortality from famine would practically be prevented if the ryot possessed a store of food, money, or credit sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest. This proposition seemed to be self-evident. For men did not die from hunger out of mere perversity, but because they had neither food in their houses to eat, nor money to buy it, nor credit to borrow it. As a class the ryot had not only nothing, but much less than nothing, being hopelessly in debt to the village money-lender. He remembered that in the early part of his service in India every ryot, however poor, had a little store of grain put away in a store room under his house sufficient to last his family two or three years. But that was now impossible, for we had set up Debt Courts upon the European model, and these little stores were swept away by the bailiffs in execution of decrees. The first step towards helping the ryot was to release him from this bondage to the money-lender. His third and last proposition was a more hopeful one, and it was this, that if certain simple remedies were applied in the village adminstration the ryot would not only possess a sufficient store, but might become comparatively wealthy. In approaching the question of the ryot's condition the important fact must be borne in mind that, although India was at present a very poor country, she possessed almost boundless possibilities of wealth. She had a fertile soil, an unfailing sun, and abundance of labour, skilful and cheap. All she wanted was working capital. If the ryot had that in sufficiency, at reasonable rates, to provide himself with water and manure, he would turn all India into a garden. He had seen this operation going on near Poona, where land that produced a crop of millet worth perhaps 10s. an acre was, by irrigation and manure, made to produce a crop of sugar cane worth £30 an acre as it stood on the ground. And such was the skill of the ryot that whatever crop he produced, whether rice, indigo, opium, tea, wheat, or tobacco, it in the end always came to the top of the market. From these three propositions would be seen the nature of the Inquiry which he asked for by his Amendment. What he desired was a village inquiry, practical and definite, in order to ascertain in detail the condition of the ryot, to learn the causes of his poverty, and to apply remedies to the evils from which he was suffering. The inquiry he wanted was a village inquiry, because in the rural villages were included 80 per cent. of the population, and because the village community was the microcosm of all India, and if they could discover the means to make one village prosperous they held the clue to make all India prosperous. For such an inquiry no imperial Commission was necessary. The local administration might be directed to select typical villages in each province and to appoint a Committee to make a thorough diagnosis of their condition. The Committee must be representative, consisting of Europeans and Indians, officials and non-officials—such as were appointed to the Deccan Riots Commission 20 years ago. Their investigation should be of a microscopic kind, to detect the microbes which blighted the ryot's prosperity. He believed that those microbes would be found to be the usurious money-lender, who should be replaced by agricultural banks; the Civil Court, which should be replaced by popular conciliation and arbitration Courts; and the harsh and rigid collection of the revenue, which should be replaced by methods suited to the habits and wishes of the ryot. If these simple remedies were adopted he believed that famines would be rendered impossible. In making these proposals he did not desire to impute any blame to the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India; but he had carefully studied the condition of the ryot for 30 or 40 years, and in this great crisis he desired to place the results of his experience at the disposal of the noble Lord and of the House. He earnestly trusted his proposals would receive sympathetic consideration. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W. R., Holmfirth) seconded the Amendment. He said that all that was asked for was some inquiry for the purpose of ascertaining whether something could not be done to prevent a recurrence of the present terrible state of affairs in India. He should be out of order were he to refer at any length to the subject of famine itself, but he might be permitted to say that they all recognised with satisfaction and pride the remedial efforts made in this country, and that they had no doubt that the Government were doing all they could to alleviate the immense mass of suffering which must ensue. They imputed no blame whatever to the present Government or any other, and, far from wishing to complain of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, they desired to diminish the responsibility at present resting upon him, and all Indian Secretaries. In the case of famine prevention was better than cure, and if anything could be done to prevent it it ought to be done. The poverty of India was, he supposed, recognised by everyone, but he did not know whether it was as generally recognised how extreme that poverty was. Poverty was a comparative term. He remembered the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton saying on one occasion that India was lightly taxed, the taxation being only half a crown per head of the population. But it should be borne in mind that in India half a crown meant something very different from what it meant in this country. The wages of ordinary labourers in many parts of India were only about a shilling a week, whereas here £1 a week was not considered high wages. He remembered having a conversation with the late Mr. Haridas Veharidas, who was a very loyal subject, and a Member of the Royal Commission on Opium, as to the condition of the people in the native States and under British rule respectively. That gentleman told him that the native Princes screwed more out of the people than we did, but that their methods were more elastic, and that they did not press for taxes in hard times. Our methods, on the other hand, were inelastic, and pressed very hardly upon the ryots in times of scarcity. If something could be done to prevent these recurrent disasters in India, the sooner that preventive was known the better. If, on the other hand, there was really no remedy, if it was in the natural order of things that these famines must occur, it would be well that the fact should be publicly known once for all. We should then realise that all we could do was to strengthen the Famine Fund and improve the Famine Code. He thought that the result of his hon. Friend's drawing attention to this subject and initiating that Debate would be to strengthen the hands of the noble Lord opposite.

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that he knew the hon. Baronet opposite in India, and was familiar with his habits of thought. He could not agree with the hon. Baronet in his wholesale condemnation of the methods of administration in India. When he knew him in India the hon. Member used to propose very much the same remedies as he proposed now, and in his general views of administration was not in harmony with the great majority of the service to which he belonged. The hon. Baronet had made some very strong statements, but they were quite unsupported by evidence. He had begun by saying that the Government had not realised the magnitude of the disaster that had befallen India. Well, the papers that had been presented and the statements that had been made on behalf of the Government must have shown, he thought, that the Government of this country and the Government of India did realise to the full the enormous magnitude of the disaster. If they had not recognised for many years the necessity of making preparations for meeting disasters of this kind, the present famine would have attained such a magnitude and been so far-reaching in its consequences, that the mortality would have exceeded any known in similar times in the present century, if not in our history. But the Government had been preparing for such an event for a great many years. When he left India more than ten years ago, preparations had already been made for a long time, founded on the Famine Commission of 1878. So full and thorough had those preparations been that the moment it was known that over a wide extent of country a great number of people would be exposed to destitution, the most ample remedial machinery was ready to be set in motion by an order of the Government. The hon. Member said that the excessive mortality that occurred in native famines was due to the poverty of the people. They might thank God, however, that up to the present time there had been no excessive mortality in consequence of the scarcity. A correspondent of the *Times*, writing a few days ago, said that he had been passing through some of the districts visited by the famine, but that he had not come across one single case of death from destitution. That was a most gratifying statement, even if it did not apply to every district. It was certain that up to the present time the deaths had been extremely few, and that happy state of things, as compared with the incidents of former famines, was the result of the preparations made by the Government. The hon. Member declared that a single year of scarcity caused deaths by millions. In the present case, however, it had not caused deaths by even thousands or hundreds. The hon. Member also said that starvation would be prevented if the cultivators could have stores of food, and of course if they possessed such stores they would be able to withstand for a considerable time the results of the failure of their ordinary crops. But it was manifestly impossible for the poor cultivators to have the necessary stores, for they lived from hand to month. But was their poverty greater than in past times? The assertions of the hon. Member on that point were unsupported, and as a matter of fact the ryots were better off now than formerly. The hon. Member affirmed that a great part of their destitution was due to their indebtedness to money-lenders, and that that indebtedness was caused by their taxation. It was true that the cultivators were indebted to the money-lenders, but the extent of that indebtedness was not as great as it was half a century ago, or at the time when the British Government undertook the administration of the Peishwa's territories. From an analysis prepared at that time it appeared that two-thirds of the population were at one time indebted to money-lenders, but when he left India, not more than one-fifth were so indebted. The Government of India and the local Governments had directed their attention to this evil for many years. As a result of the inquiry made by the Deccan Agricultural Ryots' Commission legislation was promoted to relieve the people from the consequences of their indebtedness. Courts of conciliation were founded on Eastern ideas, and they to a great extent had prevented the impoverishment of the ryot owing to his incautious indebtedness, and had made the money-lender more careful. The Government of India had extended that system, and by irresistible evidence it had been shown that it had improved the material condition of the people. He said without fear of disproof that the system of land assessment which had for many years been pursued in India was more fair than the old system. The ryot only paid according to the capacity of the land, and until the last severe famine in Southern India, the amount of revenue not collected was altogether unimportant. He was surprised to hear it said that the native system of collecting in kind was preferable and more fair. That system had been abandoned, because it was found to be so oppressive and so troublesome to the people. Native chiefs had told him that they were most glad the old system had been abolished, because it was so full of abuses and so oppressive to the people. He had himself seen the grain brought into fenced enclosures so that the people could not touch it until the agent of the State came round, took his proportion, and carried it away. If the agent was not honest he exacted bribes from the people to measure their grain in such a way as to let them off more easily, and under that system the number of petty exactions were infinite. To restore the system of payment in kind would therefore be to restore a crop of abuses from which most happily they had rescued the people. [*Cheers.*] Something had been said as to India's immense capabilities. We had been developing those capabilities by carefully selected public works, and if the present terrible disaster did not result in India's great impoverishment, it was because by carefully selected measures and public works we had for many years past been setting up the surest and most effective system of famine relief. Since he went to Bombay in 1880 the railways of India had been doubled. It might now be truly said that there was no place in the tracts of country now threatened with the famine which was more than 50 miles from a railway station. In former times of famine it was impossible to throw grain into the country because the water springs had dried up, and the other possible means of transport was not available because pack animals could not travel through the country. But now the grain, through the natural operation of commerce, flowed to the threatened districts like water running down a hill. We had besides constructed enormous irrigation works. When he was in Bombay they constructed three enormous systems of irrigation, each system irrigating a hundred miles of country. In those parts of the country where in 1877 no green blade was seen, now enormous tracts of crops were to be found independent of a rainfall. It could not be said, therefore, that nothing had been done to develop the resources and capabilities of India and to give reasonable help to the ryots. The House also knew that the assessments were not harsh. They were carefully regulated according to the capabilities of the soil, and in such a time of scarcity as the present the assessments due to the State were suspended with no sparing hand. The Government of India and the Secretary of State were in possession of the most exhaustive reports, and the library of the House was full of the results of previous inquiries into the circumstances mentioned by the hon. Baronet. In addition to that there was abundant proof that the inquiries had not been undertaken in vain. Every possible means had been taken to relieve the necessities of the people of India, and to enable the Government of India to meet this great crisis without damage to the people. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) commented on the divergence of views entertained by men of large experience in Indian affairs as in itself a proof that some further inquiry was needed. The right hon. Baronet referred to the inquiry asked for as a wide and far-reaching inquiry; but his hon. Friend made it clear that the inquiry he asked for was to be a limited one in extent and scope. Neither the Government nor hon. Gentlemen opposite would deem it to be unfitting at this time to bring the question before the House of Commons. It would be of some value to know that the attention of Parliament had been drawn to the condition of India at present. These famines formed a terrible incident in Indian history, and to whatever extent the Indian Government was able to improve these matters by taking precautionary measures and in spending money to prevent the recurrence of these scourges, he thought it was well for the House to show its keen sympathy with the Government of India in the efforts they were making. They should keep themselves closely in touch with the condition of the Indian people and their special relation to the recurrence of these famines. In the famine of 20 years ago he found that £11,000,000 were spent in relief works and that there were on one occasion at that time no fewer than 2,590,000 persons in India obtaining relief from the Famine Fund. Five and a half millions of the Indian people died from famine on that occasion, and £700,000 had been generously given by Great Britain towards the famine. He feared from the reports in the newspapers and the information given by the Secretary of State that the state of matters in India at present was approaching the seriousness of the famine of 1877-8. At present, according to the noble Lord, 136,000 square miles, with a population of 37,000,000, were affected—quite as large a number as were affected in 1877-8—while the number of Indian people receiving relief was on January 22nd, 1,750,000. Those facts proved that although we had not arrived at the pitch of disaster reached in India 20 years ago, there were undoubted elements of seriousness in the present position. In order to provide against such scourges in future they must ask themselves what had been done in the past. Now, 16 years ago, after the great famine, a Commission was appointed to inquire into the condition of India. That Commission recommended that a Famine Fund should be started of £1,500,000 a year and extra taxation was imposed on the Indian people for the purpose of raising the money. The idea was that the money should be stored up for the specific purpose of providing for future famines. In 10 years this would amount to £15,000,000, and so this might be borrowed on its security without placing the country in a worse position financially than 10 years ago. Were they in a position to-day to say that that had been done? No one knew how in the main the money had been expended. Part of it had gone in the Afghan War. He held a strong opinion that, whether war occurred or not, that Famine Fund should be left untouched. It was also clear, from the accounts, that the money had not been allocated as intended. Of the total sum which had been raised only 2 per cent. had been devoted to the special purpose of famine relief. On irrigation works—which he at once admitted was an essentian object—10 per cent. of the funds had been expended; on railways, 60 per cent., while 18 per cent. had been devoted to the reduction of debt. He could not help regretting that on the occasion for a desire being expressed to found a Mansion House Relief Fund, the Secretary of State found it impossible at once to concur in the suggestion. In the Report of the Commission, which was directly referred to in the Dispatch of the noble Lord, it was pointed out that the people of India had a profound sense of their duty to help their friends and relations in times of distress, and that this profound sense of duty made it unnecessary to provide any State aid for poor relief. But that very fact made it all the more necessary that in times of extraordinary distress we should come to the rescue of our Indian fellow-subjects generously and without delay. For the reasons he had stated, he contended that it was desirable to have the inquiry asked for, in order to obtain further and fuller information as to whether the steps recommended by the Commission which sat in 1880 had been carried out, and whether those recommendations were adequate to the changed condition of India, and also whether the administration of the Famine Fund which issued out of that inquiry had proved satisfactory or otherwise.

Mr. M. M. BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N. E.) said the views expounded by the hon. Baronet in his speech had been so fully answered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for N. E. Manchester that there was nothing left for him on that score to say except to express his concurrence with every word the right hon. Gentleman had uttered, and also emphatically to bear out his statement that the payment in cash from the ryots had proved a success as compared with the old system of payment in kind. The object, however, with which he had undertaken to trouble the House was to point out the mischievous effect that would be produced in India by the acceptance of the Amendment. He did not pretend to represent the whole of India, as, perhaps, the hon. Baronet the Member for Banff wished the House to believe that he did—[*cheers and laughter*]—and he was not an influential member of that microscopic body the British Indian Committee. [*Laughter.*] But he would say that the mischievous effect of the hon. Baronet's Amendment would be more far-reaching than was supposed by the hon. Baronet. ["Hear, hear!"] At the present time the Government in India—whether it was the Supreme or the Provincial Government—were doing their best to meet and cope with difficulties which were not due to human deficiencies, but which represented the visitation of Providence. To take advantage of such an occasion, and indirectly to cast a slur on Governments which were valiantly and actively coping with the difficulty, was, to say the least of it, not to show gratitude for services which were undoubtedly entitled to recognition by the House of Commons and the British nation. [*Cheers.*]

Sir W. WEDDERBURN: I must point out that I cast no slur on the Government. I even said that India would be grateful for the exertions which were being made.

Mr. BHOWNAGGREE said that he had heard of three cheers being given for the Queen at meetings full of disloyal sentiment. [*Laughter and cheers.*] The hon. Baronet's Amendment was practically a vote of censure, not only on the Government of India but upon the India Office and all the provincial Governments. The hon. Baronet said that the people of India would be grateful for what had been done, while in the same breath he charged the authorities with neglecting a most elementary duty. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Baronet said that his Amendment contained self-evident propositions; but the whole tenour of the Amendment, and the manner it which it was proposed, were simply calculated to advertise a certain class of agitators, who were never tired of impressing upon the people of India the inadequacy of

British rule and the want of sympathy between the rulers and the ruled. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Baronet said that he was uttering the sentiments expressed by Indian public opinion. Where had Indian public opinion called for this inquiry? [*Cheers.*] Had not that opinion been manufactured in a small room, not far from the House of Commons; sent out thence to India; brought back in the form of newspaper articles; and passed off on the House of Commons as the public opinion of three hundred millions of people? [*Cheers and laughter.*] These proceedings were not worthy of one who had been a Member of the Government of India, and who was now a Member of the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*] To show how the innocent-looking Amendment of the hon. Baronet had a bearing on proceedings afar off, he would read a sentence from an Indian newspaper which had arrived by the last mail. The Chairman of the National Congress, of which the hon. Baronet was so fond, and which he was always trotting before the House—[*laughter*]—said—

> "that the famine was a reason not for holding no Session this year, but rather for persisting in and holding it and making it as grand as possible, for these miseries of India were due to the grievances of which the Congress had been agitating the redress."

That was to say, that the want of rain in India was due to the grievances of which the agitators had complained. [*Cheers and laughter.*] By the next mail news of this Amendment would go to the people of India, who were not, as a rule, acquainted with the procedure of Parliament. The story told to them would be that the great and only friend of India in this House, the hon. Member for Banff—[*laughter*]—had proposed something by which plague and famine were to be avoided; the Secretary of State, from hardness of heart and want of sympathy, had refused the proposal; and therefore that the right hon. Gentleman and the authority which he represented were the enemies of the people. Knowing this—as the hon. Baronet must know it—and if he did not he was sorry for him—[*laughter*]—was he right in bringing forward the Amendment at all? The hon. Baronet could not exist without bringing forward some Amendment at the beginning of the Session and again at the end, with a Motion for the Adjournment of the House in between—and all without the sympathy of his own leaders—for the purpose of using poor India as a handle for obstruction of the Government which he did not support. ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "Oh!"] Last year, he remembered, when the opportunity occurred for submitting a Motion with regard to the Cotton Duties, the hon. Baronet told him that he could not undertake it, as he had not studied the question. But at a later day, when every five minutes were valuable, the hon. Baronet chose to bring forward a sickly, paltry Motion —[*laughter, and cheers*]—on the subject which was quite beside the main issue. And the story that went to India, of course, was that the hon. Baronet had been trying to do some great service to the down-trodden three hundred millions, and that the Secretary of State and the Conservative Party would not hear of it. There was another reason why this Amendment had been brought forth. This great body, the National Congress, with the pure and simple objects of which he was in perfect agreement—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"]—but with the motives and methods of which he certainly quarrelled, was mixed up with it. The Congress was represented by a microscopic body called the British India Committee, which gathered up a few schoolboys studying for the Bar—[*laughter*]—and the great lights of which were the hon. Member for Banff and the other hon. Gentleman whom his constituents would not again return. [*Laughter.*] This Committee, in confidential letters which somehow became public, applied to the Congress to be supplied with the hard cash without which it could not carry on its great work in Parliament. And when this appeal for hard cash was not responded to, the Committee, by measures such as this Amendment, tried to impress its importance and its existence on the people of India. The complaint of this Committee was, "We have piped unto you, and ye will not dance; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." [*Laughter.*] He hoped it was the last time that he should have the painful duty of protesting against these manœuvres, which did no good to India, and promoted dissatisfaction in the place of the gratitude for which the British Government had established a claim on the Indian people. [*Cheers.*] He wished to express the great satisfaction and contentment which prevailed in India in relation to the measures which had been adopted to arrest the great disaster and famine. Through the length and breadth of India there was gratitude to the British nation for coming forward so liberally to meet the needs of India. He was expressing the sincere and heartfelt satisfaction which he had heard and witnessed throughout the country to the British nation at large. [*Cheers.*]

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said it was not difficult to find the cause for the splenetic utterance of the hon. Member who had just sat down. The hon. Gentleman had recently returned from India, where he had gone with the expectation that he would be received with the same outburst of popular enthusiasm that had greeted Mr. Naoroji, but his mission had been a complete fiasco.

MR. BHOWNAGGREE: That is a perfect fiction. [*Laughter.*]

MR. SCHWANN repeated that all the popular demonstrations the hon. Gentleman expected in India had failed to come off. A people, whether they were four millions or three hundred millions, knew their friends, and it was absurd to contend that a small body of men could have engineered the receptions which had been given to Mr. Naoroji. ["Hear, hear!"] It must be admitted that in the administration of a country with 300,000,000 of people many questions arose which ought to be brought to the ear of the House of Commons, and as the opportunities for discussing Indian matters were few and far between, he thought his hon. Friend the Member for Banffshire was well advised in moving his Amendment to the Address. He was glad that, so far as the objects of the Indian Congress were concerned, they had the full sympathy of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green. Those Members of the House who were members of the Congress were in some respects but the mouthpiece of the facts and details and figures sent to them from India. [*Ministerial ironical cheers.*] He did not see how anyone could find fault with the Amendment. Of course no supporter of the Amendment expected that the Government could regulate the weather, which was the great cause of famine in India; but an inquiry might lead to the devising of means for ameliorating the sad condition of millions of the people of that country.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire was a great surprise to me. It is impossible to reconcile the hon. Member's speech with the Amendment he asks the House to accept. The Amendment asks

> "that a free and independent Inquiry shall forthwith be made into the condition of the masses of the Indian people."

At the present moment the Government of India are engaged in what is universally admitted to be one of the most enormous and difficult tasks that has ever been imposed upon the Indian Administration on behalf of suffering humanity, and one which imposes a strain upon the whole administrative machinery of the country that it can scarcely stand. And yet the hon. Baronet comes down to the House and proposes that a certain portion of the forces of the Indian Government which are now warring against the advances of famine and plague shall be removed from the region of action to the region of speculation, and required to devote their attention not to the consequences of famine but to the causes of famine. [*Ministerial cheers.*] A more inopportune moment for such a proposal could not be imagined. Let the hon. Baronet reflect on the meaning of his Amendment. It asks for a full inquiry into the condition of the masses of the people of India. The masses of the Indian people constitute one-fifth the total population of the globe. This inquiry would enable every single act of the whole administration of India—judicial, administrative, and financial—to be brought under the survey of the persons conducting the investigation. They would be enabled to go also into every custom, tradition, or habit of these 300,000,000 of people, and to discuss even every variety of their married life from polygamy to polyandry. [*Laughter.*] A more vital and far-reaching inquiry could not be conceived. ["Hear, hear!"] I am glad to be able to say that the hon. Baronet made a more sensible speech than I thought would have been possible on such an Amendment, and he advanced some practical suggestions. But what the House has to consider is the Amendment before it. I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green—who made a very effective and proper speech on the Amendment—that this Amendment emanates from the National Indian Congress. That body never loses an opportunity of attacking the Indian Administration and of endeavouring to diminish the influence of that Administration over the people of India. They passed a resolution in reference to the action taken by the Indian Government to mitigate the Indian Famine. Everyone knows that the Government of India are leaving nothing undone to cope with that calamity. I say the forces of civilisation were never better organised than they are now to fight against pestilence and famine—[" Hear, hear ! "]—and those gentlemen who meet in the Indian Congress know that no native rulers ever attempted to oppose the advance of famine on so large and so successful a scale as the English rulers of India are doing now. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yet those gentlemen find fault with all that has been done; and they insist upon a national appeal to the country, which, however, they do not seem inclined to initiate themselves. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green, who has just come back from India, vigorously attacks the policy of the Indian Congress. I am glad he makes a strong protest against the absurd assumption of a number of gentlemen, who, as has just been admitted, take all their facts and figures from India without analysing them, and arrogate to themselves the representation of millions of the people of India. [*Ministerial cheers.*] There never was a more preposterous claim; the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, who has the confidence of many sections of the Indian community—I do not suppose he claims to represent them all [*laughter*]—has effectively ridiculed it. [" Hear, hear ! "]

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: Will the right hon. Gentleman read the resolution of the Indian Congress to which he objects?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; it is the following resolution:

> "Resolved,—This congress deplores the outbreak of famine in a more or less acute form throughout India, and holds that this and other famines which have occurred in recent years are due to the great poverty of the people, brought on by the drain of the wealth of the country, which has been going on for years together, and by the excessive taxation and over assessment consequent on a policy of extravagance followed by the Government, both in the civil and the military Departments, which has so far impoverished the people, that at the first touch of scarcity they are rendered helpless and must perish unless fed by the State or helped by private charity. In the opinion of this congress the true remedy against the recurrence of famine lies in the adoption of a policy which would enforce economy, husband the resources of the State, and foster the development of indigenous and local arts and industries, which have practically been extinguished, and help the introduction of modern arts and industries. In the meantime the congress would remind the Government of its solemn duty to save human life and mitigate human suffering (the provisions of the existing famine code being in the opinion of the congress inadequate as regards wages, rations, and oppressive as regards task work), and would appeal to the Government to redeem its pledges by restoring the famine insurance fund (keeping a separate account of it) to its original footing, and to apply it more largely to its original purpose—viz., the immediate relief of the famine-stricken people."

Everyone that was at the Congress must know that that resolution is both ungracious and ungrateful. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The next resolution calls

> "the attention of the Government to the deplorable condition of the poorer classes in India, full 40 millions of whom, according to high official authority, drag out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation even in normal years,"

and suggests that they should be exempted from the payment of income taxes. I do not, therefore, wonder that the hon. Member for Bethnal Green should enter a vigorous protest against this preposterous assumption on the part of a committee sitting in England, and I am certain that when his speech is read in India, it will be acceptable to very large masses of the people of that country. [" Hear, hear ! "] Now, Sir, the hon. Baronet seemed to indicate that if the inquiry was made and effect given to the recommendations of such a body, it would be possible to stop famine in India. I contest that altogether. It is much better to look facts in the face. An hon. Member who supported him described famines as terrible and inevitable incidents in India. I thought that was a happy expression. Famines are terrible and inevitable incidents. I think it is a mistake, and is wrong for any Member of this House to hold out the hope that any remedies which he can suggest can prevent famines from desolating India. What is the problem we have to face? There are 300 millions of people in India, and over 80 per cent. of these are entirely dependent on agriculture. The one industry upon which they subsist is agriculture, and wherever a great community is entirely dependent on one industry, and whenever the raw material of that industry fails, you cannot avoid great distress and famine itself. Rain is the raw material which is essential to agriculture in the East, and whenever rain fails, not only is there great scarcity of food, but there is a total cessation of employment. In this country there are many diverse trades and industries, but wherever you have a community which is entirely dependent on one industry, and if the raw material of that industry fails, there must be intense distress. Take the cotton famine in Lancashire, that affected probably the richest community in the United Kingdom; but because everybody there was deprived of the raw material great distress ensued. Therefore so long as India remains a purely agricultural country, and so long as agriculture depends on rain falling within certain periods, when rain does not fall then distress must be widespread and great. And on the present occasion the difficulty with which we are dealing is one of a very exceptional character. It is not, as the Amendment indicates, the first attack of famine with which we are now dealing. The hon. Baronet's Amendment suggests that the masses of the Indian people are helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence. I repeat that the hon. Baronet knows that this famine now occurs owing to a total failure of rain on the top of a number of bad seasons, and that is what makes the position so serious. I do not believe that any famine has occurred of which we have any record in which there has been so wide an area of scarcity over a district so large, and where very high prices now prevail. I am glad to say that there is an enormous improvement in the machinery of the Government by which they can conquer famine. I happened to be Under Secretary for India, and spokesman for India in this House in 1874, 1877 and 1878, and it is most gratifying to notice how the Indian Government and people have developed and improved all their machinery for dealing with these evils. I do not know if any Member of this House has looked at the Famine Code which is at the end of the Return which I have laid on the Table of the House. It is well worth studying; it is a masterly document, which has been in the course of preparation for many years, and certainly shows with extraordinary clearness and detail how the forces available to cope with famine are mobilised. I am glad to say it shows that we are much better able to combat the effects of famine now than ever before. I go so far as to say that if we had had to deal with the present difficulty 20 years ago, the mortality that is already reported would have been enormously increased. Whilst on this subject I should just like to notice one or two observations which the hon. Member for Denbigh made in reference to the Famine Fund. It happened that I was Under Secretary at the time the Famine Fund was established, and all the papers relating to the subject presented to the House at that time bear my name, and I cannot understand how any body of gentlemen can go on repeating that there has been any infraction of the promise made by the Indian Government in regard to that fund. The hon. Member for Manchester has explained how these charges are made; they are founded on statements coming from India, the accuracy of which is not tested by the gentlemen who make use of them here. Sir John Strachey never established a Famine Insurance Fund in the sense which the hon. Gentleman described. The position of affairs at that time was financially somewhat difficult. Since India had been transferred to the Crown there was always difficulty in establishing an equilibrium between income and expenditure; and then occurred a series of famines which entailed upon the Government a net outlay exceeding 15 millions. It is quite clear that if the Government had every ten years to spend 15 millions on famines, as was estimated to be necessary, financially they were in a very unsound position. And therefore Sir John Strachey endeavoured to increase the resources at the disposal of the Government by imposing a certain amount of taxation, and he proposed by an ingenious contrivance to raise an insurance fund which in the first year he estimated would amount to £1,500,000, or a crore and a half of rupees. But he never undertook in any way that this should be a statutory Famine Fund, and that the money should be placed in a box and allowed to accumulate; on the contrary, right throughout his speech he combated that view. He went further. He was a man of exceptional ability and of rare administrative experience, and he knew perfectly well, what any man in this House knows, that if in a particular year you try to appropriate a certain sum annually to a specific purpose, emergencies may afterwards occur which will prevent the money being so appropriated. It has happened over and over again in this House. I recollect a Bill brought in by which 28 millions sterling was annually voted in payment of debt and as provision for a sinking fund. Circumstances occurred under which it was necessary to reduce that provision, but nobody contended that there was any gross breach of faith. Sir John Strachey, to make it clear that under certain conditions this money might not go to the specific purpose, used very plain language, which has never been quoted in full. He described how he proposed to give effect to this intention. "It is," he said, "the firm intention of the present Government to apply the funds now to be provided for this special purpose strictly to the exclusive objects which they were designed to secure." Those words are always quoted and circulated, and the last sentence, which I shall presently read, is also quoted, but the intervening part is always omitted:—

> "In such matters, no doubt, Governments cannot fetter their successors, and nothing that we could now say or do would prevent the application of this fund to other purposes. Without thinking of a future far removed from us, events might, of course, happen which would render it impracticable even for us, who have designed these measures, to maintain our present resolutions."

He, of course, had in contemplation the emergency of a war or a similar difficulty.

> "So far, however, as we can now speak for the future, the Government of India intends to keep this million and a half as an insurance against famine alone. In saying this I should explain that we do not contemplate the constitution of any separate statutory fund, as such a course would be attended with many useless and inconvenient complications, without giving any real security. Unless, then, it should be proved hereafter by experience that the annual appropriation of a smaller sum from our revenues will give to the country the protection which it requires, we consider that the estimates of every year ought to make provision for religiously applying the sum I have mentioned to this sole purpose, and I hope that no desire to carry out any administrative improvement, however urgent, or any fiscal reform, however wise, will tempt the Government to neglect this sacred trust."

["Hear, hear!"] Not a farthing of this money has ever been appropriated to carry out any administrative improvement or fiscal reform. ["Hear, hear!"] Since that fund was established a very large sum has gone to the prevention of famine throughout the country. Of course, it would have been useless to put so much in one box by itself and to add to the debt by borrowing an equivalent amount. In the same way, during the time when the exchange value of the rupee fell very heavily, the Government were compelled to make a reduction in the amount which applied to the famine insurance, but the outcome of the arrangement is that after 20 years the Government are able to say that they have realised two-thirds of Sir John Strachey's most sanguine expectations. Two-thirds of the maximum amount which he proposed to devote to famine insurance has been so applied. I will undertake to say that any statesman or financier who is able to frame a scheme which is liable to be affected by nearly all emergencies and yet who at the end of 20 years has realised two-thirds of his most sanguine expectations is a most successful administrator, and no allegation ought to be made either against him or against his successors for breach of faith. I do think it is desirable that this matter should be made clear once for all. No famine fund in the sense suggested by the hon. Gentleman was ever established. Sir John Strachey from first to last maintained that the object of this fund was, if possible, to reduce the debt, and he concluded his last speech in words which exactly describe the present position of the Indian Government:—

> "I think, my lord," he said, "that I have now made it sufficiently clear how we propose to apply the £1,500,000 which we hope to provide as an insurance against famine. We shall apply it virtually to the reduction of debt; and when the calamity of famine actually arrives we hope not only to be able to meet it without throwing fresh burdens upon the country, but to find that our means of giving efficient relief have been immensely increased by the useful works which we have carried out in the preceding years of prosperity."

That is exactly the position of the Indian Government at this moment. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman asked me how the necessary funds were to be provided for the cost of the famine. I am glad to say that the Indian Government are in no want of funds. If it had not been for the catastrophe of the present famine we had hoped that there would have been a large surplus this year, and we should have hoped that we might have then been able to remit certain portions of the existing taxation of India, but in view of the expenditure which will be caused by the exceptional difficulties of the present situation, there will, no doubt, be a deficit at the close of this year. The position of the Indian Government to meet emergencies is immeasurably stronger than it was 20 years ago. The hon. Baronet states that the great mass of the people of India have deteriorated, and are now less able than they were to meet pestilence and famine. I say there is not one iota of evidence in support of that. All the facts point the other way If the hon. Baronet will look at the reports of independent witnesses on the various relief works, notably those in the Punjab, he will see that, by universal concurrence, it is admitted that the people are now able to meet emergencies in a way they could not years ago. From the papers laid before Parliament it will be found that in the North-West Provinces the people are fighting against the exigencies of the present situation with a courage and confidence never before shown. [*Cheers.*] Whatever test you apply to India as a whole you will find that the community have prospered, and that the mass of people are better off than was the case 20 years ago. But I admit that there is one side of the problem which requires attention—namely, the enormous increase that has taken place in the population of India. The House is, perhaps, not aware that during the last 20 years the population of British India has increased by 50 millions. A certain proportion of the increase is due to annexation, but the greater portion consists of an ordinary and legitimate addition to the normal population. Scarcity of food, to a certain extent, always prevails in certain parts of India, and also a considerable amount of pestilence and disease which affects mortality in other parts. Yet the Government of India have so managed affairs during the last 20 years that the population in that country has been able to increase more than in any other part of the world. Of course, there is always in India an enormous class of people which exists entirely upon charity and which has done so from time immemorial. But contrasting the present condition of affairs with that of 20 years ago, I say the people are better able to withstand emergencies of the present kind than they were then. Twenty years ago a Commission was appointed to inquire into the methods which had been adopted to avert famine, and it made reports and suggestions which formed the basis of the present Famine Code. Therefore, the Government are in a better position, as protectors of the people against famine, than they have ever been before. I agree with the hon. Baronet that the opportunity this famine affords ought not to be allowed to pass without our taking every opportunity to inquire into and ascertaining the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities. No doubt the reports which will be made by the Local Governments and received by the Viceroy will contain suggestions in various directions and suggest improvements. If the Government do their part, may I suggest that the hon. Baronet might do his? He informed us that one of the great evils of the present day in India was the manner in which moneylenders made use of Civil Courts. But they are represented in the Indian National Congress. [*Laughter.*] If the hon. Baronet will be good enough to exercise his influence to try and induce them to make humane exercise of the Courts of Law it may add to the effect of his appeal. I think I have shown that there is no need for the House to accept the Amendment. All the hon. Baronet proposes will be done by the Government itself, and I think if the House were to accept the Amendment it would cause great surprise in India and be interpreted there as a censure not only on the Indian Government but upon the Government at home. [*Cheers.*]

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I am sure the House and the country will agree that the first duty of Parliament in this crisis is to support to the utmost of its power, morally and in other modes, the Government of India in fighting this gigantic contest against two great calamities which are almost overpowering that country at the present time. The Government of India is confronted by a terrible famine and a terrible plague, and I think certainly there is no period in modern Indian history when the Government was confronted by two foes of such magnitude at the same time. Whatever differences of opinion there may be as to minor points, our first duty is to strengthen the Administration in carrying out, as I believe they are carrying out with the greatest ability, the work now before them. [*Cheers.*] I should not have intervened in this Debate except on one ground, and that is that there has been an amount of misconception and misunderstanding with reference to the Famine Insurance Fund, which cannot be too soon or completely explained away. We see and hear ugly words—and if they are ugly words in England they will be still more ugly words when translated into the vernacular in India—to the effect that the Government of India—not merely the Viceroy and his Council or the Secretary of State and his Council, but the British Parliament—have all been guilty of what has been called a breach of trust—an abandonment of a sacred trust—that something has been done with public money that ought not to have been done. That I know to be an absolutely groundless impression—[*cheers*]—which ought to be removed. My hon. Friend the Member for Denbigh indicated what I may call the prevailing impression by apportioning in various percentages the appropriation which had been made of the fund. He stated that two per cent. had gone in relief of famine; 60 per cent. in the construction of railways (which he thought a large proportion); and the remainder in the reduction of debt, to which he took exception. As the noble Lord has explained to the House, the Famine Insurance Fund is the surplus revenue. It is nothing more nor less than a sinking fund. An assumed surplus of Rx.1,500,000 was to be applied in four distinct ways—first, in the relief of any existing famine in the year in which the money was raised; secondly, in the construction of irrigation works for the prevention of famine; thirdly, and principally, in the construction of those protective railway works (to which the right hon. Baronet, who was formerly Governor of Bombay, has alluded) which were intended to alter the state of things which caused such a calamity in 1877—namely, the impossibility of conveying food actually in existence to the parts of the country that needed it; and, fourthly, it was to be applied to the reduction of the Indian Debt. Why? Upon the very principle—to which the former and present Chancellors of the Exchequer have called attention—of the Sinking Fund of this country. By paying six millions a year towards the reduction of the National Debt the Chancellor of the Exchequer put into the hands of the Executive Government of the day a power of borrowing in case of emergency equivalent to the capital value of that fund. Therefore, the paying off five or six millions of debt means that, supposing the present calamity required it, the Indian Government would be in a position to borrow nearly six millions, practically without adding to the debt of India. The noble Lord told us what Sir John Strachey said when the scheme was propounded. I will read what he has written within the last two years on this question, after having seen the working of the scheme:—

> "This policy of insurance against famine was simple in its nature, but it has been constantly misunderstood. It has often been supposed that a separate fund was constituted, into which certain revenues were to be paid, and which could only be drawn upon for a specified purpose. No such impracticable notion was ever entertained, and every idea of the kind was from the first repudiated by the Government and by myself who was responsible for the original scheme.

The 'Famine Insurance Fund' of which people have often talked never existed. The intention was nothing more than the annual application of surplus revenue to the extent of Rx.1,500,000 to the purposes that I have described. Financial pressure has sometimes made it impossible to make the full annual grant under the famine insurance scheme, but substantially the system has been successfully maintained."

That is the story of the "Famine Insurance Fund," and if Sir James Westland's financial statement of a year ago is referred to, it will be seen how much revenue has been set aside for this purpose. During the 15 years the fund has been in existence Rx.17,644,185 has been appropriated to it, and only in a small number of years has there been any reduction in the surplus. In the years 1881-2-3-4-5 the whole amount was appropriated; in 1887-8 the amount was suspended. In 1889 it was reduced to one million; in 1890 it was one million; in 1891 it came back to one and a-half million; in 1892-93 it was one and a-half million; in 1894 it was £1,489,000, and last year, by the Act of the Legislature—the wise Act, I think—the amount was reduced from one and a-half million to one million. I do not wish to weary the House, but I should like to give hon. Members the facts of the fund. There has been applied in actual famine relief, £312,000; in the construction of irrigation works, £800,000; in the construction of protective railways, about ten millions; and in the payment of debt, over five millions. And Sir Charles Elliott, the late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who was the secretary of this Famine Insurance Fund, and knew all about it, after expressing, in words even stronger than those I have quoted from Sir John Strachey, the utter delusion as to there being any separate fund in existence, and that the Government had no other object in view than the construction of these protective works and paying off the debt, calls attention to the magnificent irrigation works to which the hon. Baronet has already alluded, and which have been constructed between 1870 and to-day. I venture to say that there is no parallel for it in the history of the world. [*Cheers.*] No Government has ever constructed such magnificent works as have been constructed in India for the protection of that country against famine. [*Cheers.*] Then as to the railway system of India. There have been something like 10,000 miles of railway constructed over the period which I have mentioned, and Sir Charles Elliott says, with reference to 5,000 of those miles, that they were demanded exclusively almost for the purpose of protection against famine, and he shows how every one of those railways which were mentioned in the Famine Insurance Fund Commission has been constructed and completed, with the solitary exception of the East Coast Railway, which, I believe, is now in hand under the noble Lord's administration and rapidly approaching to an end. Of course we are entitled to have our differences of opinion. I have a strong opinion of the goodness of the Government of India. Some of my hon. Friends do not think it so good as I do. I think it a wise, a strong, and an economical Government —[*Ministerial cheers*]—a Government which has conferred upon India untold blessings. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I do not believe in what is called "the economic drain" from India. That is rather a favourite phrase in the present day, and I do not perhaps accurately understand its meaning. No money is sent from India to this country which does not either repay the interest upon capital which has been sent from this country to India, and which has been employed in the construction of the works which have been such a great boon to the people, or in payment of services amply and richly deserved by the English Government in carrying on the government of India. [*Cheers.*] I fully appreciate—the House knows that perfectly well—the very heavy drain upon India by the depreciation in the value of the rupee, but Sir John Strachey, in the book from which I have already quoted, says that the cash advantage to the people for whose use these railways have been constructed is something between 50 and 60 millions sterling per annum. I think the entire loss to India upon these railways, which entirely arises from the depreciation in the value of silver—because if we were still at the old rate of ten rupees to the sovereign there is a large profit—is something like two and a-half millions of tens of rupees. That represents "the economic drain" from India in respect of these large works. ["Hear,

hear!"] Whatever our differences of opinion may be, I think we shall all concur in thinking that the Government of India, supported by the Government at home, are doing the very utmost to grapple with this calamity. I have myself gathered, from what the noble Lord has said, that he is perfectly satisfied with the effect of these protective works in preventing loss of life. It does seem to me very gratifying that no loss of life has yet occurred, and I think it is the duty of the Government to prevent any human being, any subject of the Queen in India, losing his life from starvation. ["Hear, hear!"] Then, I think, when you have passed the starvation limit and come to compassionate relief, that is the sphere for private charity. I take this opportunity of saying that I hope the Government of India have not closed their minds finally as to the question of an Imperial contribution—[*cheers*]—not to the national relief fund, but to the Indian Exchequer. I understood the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to say that the time has not yet arrived to consider that question. I quite agree with him, but if it should prove to be the fact, notwithstanding the surplus of which the noble Lord has spoken, that this famine will entail, as I am afraid it will, a very considerable charge upon the revenues of India, for the loss from the land revenue will be considerable, I think that is the time for this House, and I am sure this House will be really representing the people of the country, in the same spirit in which it made a contribution in the case of the Afghan war to the Indian Exchequer, to make an Imperial contribution to the Exchequer of India in aid of the taxation of India. ["Hear, hear!"] It would be in relief of the whole people of India, and it would be a sum given by the whole people of Great Britain. [*Cheers.*] It would not, in my opinion, in any way interfere with private charity. I am only throwing that out as a suggestion, as a hope that the Government have not finally made up their minds as to this matter. There is one other suggestion I would make to the noble Lord. It is in reference to the question whether the money paid at the relief works is entirely in cash. I would suggest whether it would not be desirable—perhaps this is an economic heresy—to consider, though it was an unfortunate word to use, the introduction of something in the nature of the Truck Act there, so that you could pay these poor people on these relief works in grain instead of money. The object of that would be to prevent grain being forced up to an extreme price by competition. I believe the noble Lord is perfectly sound in the view that he took that it is not the duty of the country to buy and sell grain; but I would suggest whether, as in this country, under our administration of the Poor Law, a certain amount of relief is given in kind, a certain amount could not be given in India in these cases. It is quite certain the Government could buy at a much lower rate than the poor people themselves could buy, and perhaps of a better quality too. I apologise to the House for having detained it so long. [*Cheers.*] I hope my hon. Friend will not put the House to the trouble of dividing upon this question, and will withdraw his Amendment, which can have no practical value at the present time, and which would be very much misunderstood in India if it were pased. ["Hear, hear!"] It will be much better to send forth a united message to the people of India that this House, representing the people of Great Britain, will do all it can in order to mitigate those two terrible calamities which are now devastating the country. [*General cheers.*]

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff) said he had heard with very great pleasure the expression of opinion of the right hon. Gentleman that this country should in case of need give a national contribution to the Indian Exchequer. His noble Friend in his speech referred to the way in which the Indian Government was at present enabled to meet the expenses of the famine, and he said that there was no need of money, but at the same time he pointed out the very great pressure that would be brought to bear upon the finances of India. He (Mr. Maclean) thought they ought not to underrate the immense amount of pressure that was going to be brought to bear upon those finances. The famine would cost the country a good many millions of money. There would be a very heavy loss in land revenue alone, and they knew that in the last year or two the

Indian Government had had to impose fresh taxation in order to make both ends meet. Now if there was a deficit of several millions of money owing to the famine, how was the Indian Government going to find the money except by fresh taxation? He did not in any way join with those who always talked about British rule having impoverished India, but he did maintain that of late years England had pressed too hardly upon the finances of India; that to a certain extent India had been impoverished, and unfairly so, by the very great burden cast upon the taxpayers of India, in maintaining such an extensive scheme of frontier defence as they were called upon to support. That frontier had been extended for many thousands of miles, and millions of money had been taken from the taxpayers in the plains in order to pay the cost of that vast scheme of frontier defences, and so when misfortune fell upon the country at large, those taxpayers were not so well able to pay their way as they would otherwise have been able to do. He had always maintained that this enormous frontier defence scheme of India, which Lord Roberts told them would not be complete until they had extended the railways to Cabul and Candahar, ought to have had some support from the Imperial Government, and in that way the people of India had some real claim upon the people of this country for assistance. He hoped the Government would listen, when the time came, to an application from the Indian Government for a national grant from the Imperial Treasury. The First Lord of the Treasury said he believed there was no precedent for anything of the kind, but there was a famous phrase of Burke's, "that the opportunity for a real statesman is when the file affords no precedent." That was his opportunity for showing what a wise and magnanimous statesman could do. He believed if this occasion were seized upon to impress upon the people of India the readiness of this country to come to the help of the poor taxpayers of that country when they were sorely pressed, it would have a most widespread and lasting effect, and gain them the hearts of the Indian people more than any other act of theirs could do. We must remember that however much they collected by the way of private charity, it was very small in comparison with the enormous expenditure that had now become necessary not only on account of the famine, but also on account of the plague. He joined in the encomiums passed on the servants of the Government of India for the efforts they were now making to save life in that country, but while he accorded the highest praise to the district officers, he must say he had seen a certain holding back on the part of the Central Government which he very much regretted, and an attempt to minimise the awful sufferings of the people of India at the present moment. The Governor of the North West Provinces of India, in his admirable despatch of November 23, had said that he was anxious to hold a public meeting for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions from charitable persons in order to meet the distress among the poorer classes which was likely to be caused by the famine and the plague. The Central Government, however, after taking a whole month to consider the subject, came to the conclusion that the time had not yet come when it was necssary to take that course.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is now discussing the conduct of the Government with reference to the existing famine and plague in India. That is not raised in the Amendment. The Amendment only deals with the predisposing causes of the famine and plague.

*Mr. MACLEAN said that he thought that as a certain latitude had been allowed to other hon. Members he might be permitted to refer to those subjects which, in his view, were of real moment to the Indian people. He could only deprecate the action of the Government of India in endeavouring to minimise the effects of the famine and plague in that country. It was impossible to exaggerate the horrors which were affecting the people of India as a result of that famine and plague; while he did not hesitate to give credit to the Government for what they were now doing to relieve the distress in India, they ought to look at what was going on with the view of giving India our assistance as a nation. ["Hear, hear!"]

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said that he was in India during the famine of 1877-1878. The Indian Government had then created a special famine fund from the proceeds of two new taxes—namely, the income tax and the assessed taxes. At that time Sir John Strachey, the then Finance Minister, had pledged himself that those taxes should only be imposed for a year, and that their proceeds should be applied only to the relief of the distress caused by the famine. It was pointed out at the time that these new taxes must necessarily cause great pressure upon the people of India, and the only excuse for imposing them was that they were to be used for the purpose of creating an insurance fund against the effects of famine. It was urged that it would be most unfair to impose these new taxes upon an impoverished people who had been suffering under a two years' famine. Of course, the assurance that was given by Sir John Strachey at the time that the proceeds of these new taxes should be used for the purpose of a famine insurance fund disarmed opposition to the proposal. The pledge of Sir John Strachey had been followed up by declarations on the part of the Indian Government that the arrangement should be faithfully carried out. The Indian Government were, therefore, fully pledged not to apply the proceeds of these taxes to any other purpose than for the relief of famine. It was, however, now clear that that pledge had been broken, and that the proceeds of these taxes had been used for the purpose of the Afghan and Burmese wars. He recollected that some dozen or 15 years ago he had been Chairman of the British Indian Committee, of which the hon. Member for Bethnal Green had been a member, and had expressed some strong views—

MR. BHOWNAGGREE said that there was no such Committee sitting 15 years ago, and that he certainly had never served upon it.

DR. CLARK said that the hon. Member must recollect that they were both on the Committee to which he referred.

MR. BHOWNAGGREE said that he denied that such was the case.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! These personal questions are a long way from the Amendment before us. ["Hear, hear!"]

DR. CLARK said that he had only referred to the matter as the hon. Member had made statements which had reflected upon the motives of the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire. The noble Lord had practically admitted all that the hon. Baronet had contended for. The noble Lord had asserted that there had been a vast improvement in the condition of the agricultural classes in India during the last 30 years, but that he denied, because, in his opinion the improved condition of India was to be attributed not to agriculture, but to manufactures and commerce. They had now got their own cotton mills in Bombay, and it was by their means that India was becoming prosperous. However successful Indian agriculture might have been some years ago, when the prices of agricultural produce were high, it had suffered greatly in recent years owing to low prices. Another cause of the present prosperity of India was to be found in the development of her coal fields, which enabled Indian manufactures to be carried on with success. He was rather afraid they were poorer to-day, because they were probably much more in debt. He believed the ryots, in some places in the protected States, were more favourably situated than the ryots in places under the British Government—that they had really a higher standard of comfort. The reason of that was that the native Governors considered matters more carefully than the British Government. The British Government might reasonably be compared to a rack-renting landlord. The people of India and Bombay were practically tenants of the State, and they had been racked by the State, with the result that there was poverty. He did not desire to suggest that the Government would not do all that they possibly could—common humanity demanded that they should; and perhaps the noble Lord was justified in preventing private charity acting earlier. He hoped, however, that if they erred at all they would err by spending too much instead of too little in the endeavour to keep the people alive.

Question put, "That those words be there added."

The House divided:—Ayes, 90; Noes, 217.—(Division List—No. 5—appended.)

AYES.

Allison, Robert Andrew
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Brigg, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Collery, Bernard
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Thomas J. (Wexford)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Ghee, Richard
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
O'Kelly, James
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Roberts, John H. (Denbigh)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehy, David
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Tuite, James
Tully, Jasper
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)
Woodall, William
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Wedderburn and Mr. Henry J. Wilson.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Francis Tress (Windsor)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigham, John Charles
Bigwood, James
Birrell, Augustine
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Charrington, Spencer
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Clough, Walter Owen
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Engledow, Charles John
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir. R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.

Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fowler, Rt Hn Sir Henry (Wol'tn)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G.J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John (Sussex)
Kemp, George
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillywn-(Sw'ns'a)
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McArthur, William
McCalmont, Maj-Gen. (Ant'm N)
McIver, Sir Lewis
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W.F.
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parkes, Ebenezer
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir John Benjamin
Strachey, Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R.E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmund R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther

SECRET SERVICE FUND.

The next proposed Amendment stood in the name of Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.), in the following terms:—

> "And we humbly represent to your Majesty that, in the opinion of this House, events have occurred to require that the administration of that portion of the Secret Service Fund which is spent by the Home Office should be subject to the examination of the Public Accounts Committee of the House."

MR. T. M. HEALY said he had consulted with his hon. Friend the Member for South Mayo, who had undertaken to second the Amendment, and they had come to the conclusion that they would have a wider scope for discussion of the subject upon the Home Office Vote or some other vote in Committee of Supply on the Estimates than under this Amendment. Therefore they had determined not to proceed with the Amendment which stood in his name.

REGISTRATION LAWS.

MR. EDWARD STRACHEY (Somerset, S.) moved the following Amendment, to add at the end of the Question the words:—

> "And we humbly express our regret that no Measure is announced by your Majesty for a simplification of the registration laws for Parliamentary and local government elections."

The hon. Member said that, in moving the Amendment, he wished to confine his remarks to the anomalies which prevailed in the working of the Registration

Laws as they at present existed, and he had no intention or desire to introduce the larger question of enfranchisement. His object was to induce the Government, if possible, to undertake the work of simplifying the laws of registration in regard to both Local Government and Parliamentary elections. At present there was great confusion and difficulty in dealing with them. For Parliamentary and Local Government Board elections there were no fewer than eight kinds of qualifications, and 22 different ways of becoming qualified. He thought that a mere statement of the anomalies and inconsistencies of the present system would justify the course he had taken in moving the Amendment. The existing Registration Laws, in fact, were so complicated that many persons did not at all understand them, and in consequence neglected or declined to place themselves on the register. In other cases fully-qualified men could not get on the register unless they were looked after by skilled Party agents on either side. And even if a man got on the register he might not be safe, for a change of overseers under present conditions might lead to his removal from it. Indeed, in the absence of any paid official who should be held responsible for seeing that a proper and complete register was kept in every town, no man was safe from being removed from the list at one time or another. A glaring anomaly was that while in a county it was necessary for freeholders to have only a six months' qualification, in a borough twelve months were necessary. Then as regarded succession to freehold property in counties, at the present time a man who succeeded to such property before the appointed day might, if the list was open, be put on the register immediately, although his qualification as to residence was only that of two or three days. This had happened over and over again in the case of beneficed clergymen in the Church of England, though his occupation of the benefice or incumbency had been only a few days. He thought it very unfair that those special facilities should be given to a certain class of freeholders; but he should not complain if similar facilities were given to the ordinary man, provided that he was qualified to vote. Then, in the case of leaseholds in counties and leasehold boroughs, there was great anomaly as to the respective times required for qualification. Again, a man possessing a freehold in a county might live in America if he liked and still retain his vote, but if his property was in a borough he would have to live within seven miles in order to do so. Then as to the ordinary electors, most of whom were householders, in many cases they were unable to get on the register under two years and five months. This state of things could not be defended, and he hoped the Government would be inclined to deal with the question generally, with the view of putting the Registration Laws in an intelligible and reasonable condition. ["Hear, hear!"] Speaking in a Debate on a Registration Bill introduced in March 1893, the first Lord of the Treasury spoke on the matter, and said he sympathised with the effort to reform the Registration Laws, particularly in relation to the two points of transfers from constituency to constituency and of the right of successive occupation, the right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "The next two points connected with the reform part of this plan to which I wish to allude relate to transfers from constituency to constituency and to the right of successive occupation. Let me say at once that with regard to both of those I sympathise absolutely with the wishes of the Government. My objection is not to the object, but to the machinery by which the object is to be carried out."

The right hon. Gentleman had now an opportunity of carrying out his views on the subject and of providing machinery of his own, and if he would take advantage of it he would get rid of a state of things under which at the present moment a man might be kept off the register for two and a half years. Another anomaly in the present state of the law was that there was no succession from one borough to another, or from one county to another. That might perhaps, prove a somewhat complicated matter to remedy, but certainly there could be no difficulty as to succession in the case of a man moving from one constituency to another in the same county or borough. With regard to succession from the lodger point of view, great difficulty and hardship arose. Directly a lodger became a householder he lost his vote. If a young man who was a lodger married and became a householder he was disfranchised and kept off the register for two and a half years. That was not only an anomaly, but a great injustice and hardship. He hoped the Government would deal before long with the lodger franchise. At the present time the law with regard to it was in a most unsatisfactory state. There was nominally a £10 qualification, but it was time after time evaded. The declaration made by the lodger was regarded by the revising barristers as *primâ facie* evidence of qualification, and it had also been held to be *primâ facie* of value. In some cases the barristers had said: "If you have any grievance, lay the matter before the Treasury." That was not a satisfactory state of things, and he could see no reason why the lodger should be in a better position than the occupier or freeholder who had to prove his claim. He ventured to think that the onus of proof should be put on the lodger, and not on those opposing his claim, to prove that he was not qualified. Then he thought it was very desirable that the powers of revising barristers should be increased, and that they should have power to inflict fines in cases in which it was proved that the case presented to them was of a fraudulent nature. At present they were powerless to check fraud. He now turned to the question of the dates for making claims and objections. At present claims and objections had to be made on the same day. That was very undesirable in the interests of a good register. In boroughs it might be easy to make objections on the day on which claims were sent in, but in the case of counties it was very different, and it was very desirable that claims should be sent in a few days earlier than the last day for making objections. Then, with regard to the register, there was now a register for Parliamentary elections, for County Councils, District Councils, Parish Councils—in fact, four or five divisions. It would be much better if, instead of having all those separate lists, there were one register only. Of course, it would be necessary to star those electors who were entitled to vote for all, but there would be no difficulty in that. It was done at the present time. He had already quoted one expression of opinion by the First Lord of the Treasury showing that when a Liberal Government was in office he had no objection to registration reform. He now had the opportunity of bringing in a Bill embodying machinery he could himself approve. He would now quote another expression of opinion by the right hon. Gentleman. Speaking on the Second Reading of the Registration Bill in 1893, he said:

> "The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Storey) and *I* both appear to have approached this Bill, certainly with no desire to find fault with it, but to recognise, as I believe every man, in whatever part of the House he sits, recognise, that the existing law with regard to registration prevents certain classes of people, whos under a better law would be voters, from being voters."

It was quite clear from that and the previous quotation that the right hon. Gentleman had no objection to the principle of the Amendment. He (Mr. Strachey) approached this question and moved this Amendment in exactly the same spirit and with exactly the same object. He did not want to raise a party controversy on the matter. All he desired to do was to ask the Government to find time to introduce a Bill to carry out the views the First Lord of the Treasury had expressed, so that a larger number of electors who were now kept off the register by the unsatisfactory state of the law, should be no longer kept off. It was quite clear the right hon. Gentleman viewed the question as not one of party controversy, and if so, what difficulty was there in the way of his undertaking to legislate upon it? He ventured to express the hope, therefore, that the Government, even at this late hour, would recognise the necessity for reform, and would attempt to deal with the question in order that men who were now kept off the register should be put upon it.

*MR. JOHN BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley), in seconding the Amendment, said that the Amendments hitherto brought before the House on the Queen's Speech had been very much of a local character. This Amendment was national in its character and bearings, and he believed, was the only one on the list which was indeed truly national, and so interested the whole nation. There were thousands of people to whom Reform Acts had been of no practical value, because, though the spirit of Reform had been granted the machinery for carrying out Reform was imperfect. The work had been undertaken, but there were not the tools for the purpose. Recent circumstances had brought to his mind the fact that popular feeling on this subject was strong and widespread. Even in Manchester, where it might be assumed people were well able to take care of themselves, they were obliged to employ costly agents to obtain for themselves the opportunity of voting. He would not pursue the various anomalies of the registration system, for Members must have knowledge and experience gained in the endeavour to comply with some 118 Acts of Parliament supposed to regulate their conduct; but he asked how many Members in the House could at once tell the nature of the qualification for the vote they were entitled to exercise? Very few, he thought, could do so. There was one particular qualification readily remembered, and that was the "property qualification," and it was interesting, in looking through the many curious anomalies, to find the property qualification occupying a very singular position. Though the owner might be away from home in Spitzbergen or Somaliland, studying an eclipse or hunting lions, no matter where he travelled the qualification still attached, and he could be placed in offices of trust and responsibility in the neighbourhood, the envy of those around. The simple possession of the forty shilling freehold gave the franchise, and nothing could deprive him of it. He would not carry the matter further, and spared the House the attempt to show the great need of a change. A long list of well-known names from either side of the House was the record of attempts made to reform the registration system. It should be as easy for a man to exercise his vote as it was difficult for him to escape the payment of his rates, and he hoped that a promise would be forthcoming from the Government that they would endeavour to do something on this subject. He believed it was the universal opinion of those who had fairly considered the matter that it would not be expedient to refer the subject to an ordinary Committee, but he suggested that a small expert Committee might consider the subject, and report to the House from time to time, and in that way endeavour to make clear to every man his qualification for a vote. The trouble, expense, and time, now so often necessary, had disgusted many working men, and on their account he pressed this matter on the attention of the Government.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, East) acknowledged there were grave and great anomalies in our system of registration, but with the long list of measures to which they were already pledged it was impossible that the Government could be expected to give any promise on this subject for the present Session. The suggestion of the hon. Gentleman that consideration should be relegated to a small Committee was one the House would surely not entertain. Constitutional changes such as would be involved must be considered in the House, and Debates would probably be long and contentious. He would venture to say that an alteration of our system of registration would probably require a whole Session. When the Liberal Party were in power they never did more than bring in Bills on the subject of registration. Those Bills never became law, because Members who represented county divisions and Members who represented boroughs could not agree. Now the law should be changed. There were grave anomalies in our registration system, but the Bills introduced by the late Government were practically Reform Bills dealing with many things outside registration and with matters not germane to registration. There was, for instance, a proposal to so reduce the period of qualification that the door would have been opened to any amount of "jerrymandering" of constituencies. To some extent he agreed with the principle that a man who paid his rates should have a vote, but the Bill of the late Government did not introduce that rating qualification. The lodger franchise did not make a man pay his rates, and the tenement franchise only did so indirectly. It was an anomaly that when a man ceased to be a lodger and became a householder he did not at once get on the register, and there were anomalies in relation to the Service Franchise whereby in the constituency adjoining his the action of the Liberal agent had disqualified the votes of 300 or 400 employés in a large industrial establishment.

*MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) claimed for the Liberal Party that they had endeavoured to carry out registration reforms in the period between the years 1868 and 1874, when no less than five Bills on the subject were introduced, and would be law now but for the action taken in the other House. In 1878 a Bill was introduced by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, but it was so mutilated in the other House as to be vitally impaired. The hon. Member opposite had said it would be impossible to carry through in the present Session such a wide reform as registration. But if he had considered the matter in the proper light he would have realised that it could be dealt with quite simply. Their Registration Laws were a mass of absurdities and anomalies, but they could be very adequately dealt with by introducing a simple system of franchise. If they once did away with the different varieties of franchise which now existed they would have no difficulty in dealing with the Registration Law. The obvious solution was to adopt adult suffrage with a certain period of occupation solely for the purpose of identification. By taking occupation as necessary for identification they would satisfy the requirements of local elections that every voter should have some interest in the locality where he voted. An immediate and very simple reform in registration law might be effected by striking out column four in division one of the Register. The fourth column might be of some use in the ownership part of the list, and possibly also in the service franchise, but in division one and three it was unnecessary and misleading. That was an immediate reform which he believed the hon. Gentleman would not find it impossible to promise on behalf of the Government, and if he could not give any further promise to the House he trusted he would at any rate go as far as that.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.) hoped the hon. Member for Somerset would not expect on an occasion like this that he should go into the question of the imperfections and anomalies of the Registration Laws. Everyone who had considered the question at all was quite ready to admit there were anomalies and imperfections, and a great deal could be said, on the question of the period of residence, about the lodger franchise, and about succession claims. All those questions were fair matters for consideration; yet, surely, it did not follow that because of these imperfections and anomalies the Government were to be censured for not bringing in a Bill at once in their second Session to deal with them. The hon. Member proposed to censure the Government for not bringing in such a Bill, but the hon. Member for Keighley had frankly declared that this would not be at all a small question, that, on the contrary, it would be most contentious, and he had advised that the whole law should be swept away and an entirely new Code produced. Whilst admitting these anomalies and imperfections existed, he would like to point out that the Session did not last for an indefinite time, and he thought the Government had acted wisely by, instead of throwing a large number of Bills on the Table, making a selection of those measures they intended to pass rather than including a number which every Member knew could not possibly be passed within the limits of a Session. ["Hear, hear!"] The question, as he had said, was full of contentious points; it was one which would occupy a great deal of time, and, after all, the Government must have the discretion as to what they should name in the Queen's Speech and press forward during the Session. ["Hear, hear!"]

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) observed that whether there might be Divisions or not on this subject he thought no one could fail to see the value of taking some opportunity of entering a protest against the present state of the Registration Law. He thought the working classes especially had a real grievance in this matter, and he knew the great waste of time which they incurred, the trouble they were put to, and the disgust with which they were filled by necessary attendances at the Courts, the adjournment of their cases, and the ultimate omission from the register of people who might have lived and had an interest in the district for a very long time, constituted a great political evil. It might be that the Government were not able to deal with this matter at once —and he, for one, should hesitate to take part in what might technically be regarded as a vote of want of confidence—but he did urge upon them that they should take the first opportunity of remedying what was at present a most abusive system and most unjust to many classes of the people. What should be the principle of dealing with the matter? The franchise was a great right which belonged to anyone who sought to maintain his political position. It ought, therefore, to be an easy duty to get upon the register, and when once a man's name was upon it, it ought to be difficult to be removed. He ventured to say the reverse was the case under their existing system. The only remedy for the present anomalous condition of things was one franchise, and a reform of the registration was an easy corollary of that. Again, the want of adequate powers of amendment on the part of the revising barrister gave rise to technicalities and injustices often of a gross character. That power ought to be extended. A wide registration measure giving a short term of residence would, in his opinion, be a Conservative measure, because the more they widened the existing household franchise, the more facilities they gave for the admission to the register; and the more obstacles they placed in the way of removals from the register, the more they made a barrier against mere manhood suffrage, which was the demand of one political party in the State. He regretted nothing more than the waste of time to political parties which was involved in the work of registration. That work ought to be done for them automatically by some responsible officer, so that instead of their energies being devoted to the drudgery of registration they might be devoted to political teaching. He hoped the Government would realise what he believed to be the firm determination of a very large class of voters, that these iniquities should no longer remain on the Statute Book.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) believed the difficulties which had been pointed out would never be grasped by the House so long as they were treated as registration difficulties, and one reason why he could not vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend was because he was convinced the hon. Member was wrong in believing it was possible to obtain the single register of which he had spoken until the country had made up its mind to have a simple franchise. The anomalies of the present system were enormous. He was convinced that it was not worth keeping up all the extraordinary divisions in the present franchise, which ought to be replaced by a single franchise which must not be narrower than the present. He hoped the country would sooner or later come to the conclusion that it was desirable to establish a simple franchise—either manhood or universal—but until it came to that view they would never be able to get rid of the existing anomalies. He agreed with his hon. Friend next him (Mr. McKenna), as to the simplification of the franchise being the root of the whole question. The Amendment, however, was a registration Amendment, and not believing that that simplification was possible under the present franchise conditions, he found himself unable to vote with his hon. Friend the Member for Somerset.

Question put, "That these words be there added."

The House divided:—Ayes, 59; Noes, 141.—(Division List—No. 6—Appended).

AYES.

Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Collery, Bernard
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hogan, James Francis
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Kilbride, Denis
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Leod, John
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)

O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Paulton, James Mellor
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Roberts, John H.
Roche, John (East Galway)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Sheehy, David
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tuite, James
Tully, Jasper
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, Joh. H. (Middlesbrough)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Strachey and Mr. Brigg.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigham, John Charles
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Butcher, John George
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Charrington, Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Combe, Charles Harvey
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. SW.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Donkin, Richard Sim
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Hamilton, Rt. Hon Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Lord Arthur
Howard, Joseph
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jebb, Richard Calverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Kenny, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
McCalmont, Maj.-Gen (Anr'mN)
McIver, Sir Lewis
McKillop, James
Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Stone, Sir John Benjamin
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh., N.)
Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER after the usual interval,

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS.

MR. GEORGE MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid) proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words,—

> "And that we humbly represent to Your Majesty the great regret of this House that no reference has been made in Your Majesty's Speech regarding a Bill to discontinue the deportation of paupers from England and Scotland to Ireland."

He said that so long ago as 1854 the attention of the House of Commons had been called to this grievance; but, though the injustice was admitted, to this day no Government had yet undertaken to apply a remedy. Speaking in the House in 1854, Mr. Maguire said that

> "the object which he had in view was to provide that a person should have relief in any

Parish or Union in which he was resident; that he should have the right to it; and that there should be no fear that he would be removed to the locality on which he might be chargeable."

The Home Secretary of that day admitted that it was a question which the Government ought to inquire into; and he thought that the law should be altered. That was 50 years ago, and yet the same demand was still being made. On that occasion Lord Claud Hamilton, member for a division of Tyrone, joined in the demand made by Mr. Maguire. In the House of Lords, later, Lord Donoughmore made the same demand, and Lord Aberdeen admitted that the law ought to be altered, and expressed the hope that the Government would find time to attend to it. Complaint was frequently made that so much of the time of the House was occupied by Irish matters, but was this surprising when admitted grievances remained so long unredressed? He hoped that the present Government would end the anomaly of Irishmen, who had spent their whole working lives in Great Britain, being deported to Ireland as soon as they became chargeable on the rates. The taxes in Ireland were twice and thrice as heavy as those in England. Where agriculturists in England were paying in rates 2s. 6d. in the pound, the fellows in Donegal and Tyrone were paying 5s. and 4s. 6d. in the pound.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is travelling away from the Amendment.

Mr. MURNAGHAN said that this question was larger than it looked. In the union of Carrickmacross there were no less than seven paupers who had been sent over from Great Britain after having worked the greater part of their lives in that country. There were 169 unions in Ireland, and, at the same rate for all, the cost of these deported paupers would be £15,000 to £20,000 a year. In 50 years, therefore, the amount involved was to be reckoned at a million. Again, though population dwindled in Ireland, the number of paupers increased. In 1866 the population was five and a-half millions, while the paupers numbered 65,000. In 1896 the population was only four and a-half millions, while the paupers numbered 98,000. If an Englishman in Ireland applied to the parish for relief, the Irish union had no power to deport him to his native country. Was this a fair arrangement as between the two countries? He hoped that such a big-hearted man as the present Chief Secretary would not allow this anomaly to continue any longer. He begged to move.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.) seconded the Amendment. He said that the case rested on equalisation of treatment as between Great Britain and Ireland. On Thursday next he should ask the Lord Advocate a question about an Irish pauper deported from Dumfriesshire to Cavan. The question was one of the greatest importance to the Irish ratepayer, and he thought there would be no difficulty in passing a short Bill to redress the grievance, seeing how unanimous was the feeling in the matter.

Mr. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.) said that the grievances complained of in the Amendment might seem a small matter to Englishmen and Scotchmen, but he could assure the House that the people of Ireland had taken it much to heart. Surely it was an intolerable state of things under which it constantly happened that a youth left Ireland for England, Scotland, or Wales, and having resided there for 40 or 50 years by the fruits of his industry—helping to build up the great country of Great Britain—became infirm and destitute, and applied for relief at a workhouse, was sent back to Ireland—on the order of two Justices of the Peace—to be a disgrace to his relatives and a burden on the rates to which he had never contributed a farthing. The very unfair law under which those things were done was passed in 1854 by a Liberal Government, despite the opposition of the Irishmen and the friends of Ireland then in the House. It had, therefore, been in operation—a disgrace to the Statute Book—for 45 years, and it was high time to abolish it. Previous to 1854 the law was precisely the same in regard to Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen and Irishmen; but the removal of paupers from a parish in England to a parish in Wales, or *vice versa*, had caused so much discontent that the Liberal Party, at the General Election before 1854, made the bringing in of a Bill to abolish the grievance one of the planks of their platform. Accordingly, in 1854, the then President of the Local Government Board in the Liberal Administration brought in a Bill abolishing the practice of the removal of paupers from one parish to another in Great Britain, but leaving Ireland outside its operation, though the inclusion of Ireland in the Act was urged by the President of the Local Government Board in the preceding Derby Administration and by Viscount Palmerston. The 45 years during which the Act had been in operation was long enough to leave Irishmen under such a law. He considered it an insult to Irishmen that they were not treated to the same laws as Englishmen, Scotchmen and Welshmen, and he hoped there would be no delay on the part of the Government in introducing the Bill or in adopting some other means for putting an end to the disgrace. He was sure the Amendment would receive the support of all sections of Irish Members. The ratepayers of every part of Ireland suffered from this injustice, and resolutions condemning it had been passed by Unionist and Nationalist Boards of Guardians alike. In the Carickmacross Union—which was in his constituency—there were no fewer than seven deported paupers, whose cost came to a halfpenny in the £ upon the rating. If these men had done any service in Ireland he would not complain. But one of them had spent 50 years in Scotland, and another 40 years in Scotland, and it was only when they had become worn out and useless that they had been sent back to Ireland. The average cost of the keep of each of these men was £10 per annum; or, if they were in hospital—as probably they would be—from £12 to £14 per annum. He had put several questions to the late Lord Advocate of Scotland in regard to those men, and had got such little satisfaction that he had put down a Motion to reduce the salary of the right hon. Gentleman, but before the Vote was reached the right hon. Gentleman had disappeared to some more profitable quarters. [*Laughter.*] Up to the present he had not had an opportunity of putting a question to the present Lord Advocate, but if the Government did not put an end to the grievance he would have to come to close quarters with the right hon. Gentleman. [*Laughter.*] Such men as these, after spending the best part of their lives in Scotland, were at present costing the ratepayers a considerable sum. In regard to the case of one man, who was sent back to Ireland after spending 20 years in the south and west of Scotland, the Lord Advocate stated, in reply to a question, that the man was sent home by the local authorities in accordance with his own desire. He was afraid that that was not an accurate reply. He had taken the trouble to make further inquiries into the case, with the result that this man made a declaration before a magistrate to the effect that he was compelled either to leave the Glasgow workhouse or to go to Ireland. He had to consent to go against his will, as he was totally unfitted for work. This man was feeble and old, with one foot in the grave, when he made that declaration, and under those circumstances it was very unlikely that he had made a false declaration. He brought forward this case in order to show the difficulty he and his hon. Friends had to meet when, in reply to their questions, they received replies made up by officials. The rates of this country were not raised by pauper Englishmen or Scotchmen being sent back here, and it was the unfortunate Irishmen who helped to make this country what it was. There was another case, even worse, of a man of about 65 years old, who made a declaration that after about 50 years spent in Scotland he and his family were separated, and he was made to go to Ireland against his will. He told the authorities that if they sent him to Ireland he would jump overboard; but, of course, the result was that he was sent with keepers, and he had had to purchase a burial-place in order that he might be laid to rest in the same place as his family. This unfortunate man was, in the most unnatural manner separated from his wife and children. These Acts were radically unjust, and were passed only to meet a pressing emergency which was temporary. They were renewed from time to time, and a general permanent Act was subsequently passed which gave to magistrates the power of removing natives of Ireland to their own country when they had become chargeable on the poor rates of England or Scotland. The prediction made 43 years ago by the Earl of Donoughmore had turned out to be true, and the ratepayers suffered an injustice from the present state of the law. This was not a political subject, and therefore he expected to have some support from all sides of the House; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, as well as the Lord Advocate for Scotland, took up the matter, it would be supported by every lover of fair play in that House. He hoped they would have a satisfactory reply from the right hon. Gentleman, and that this would be the last occasion on which any Member from Ireland would be able to complain of this great grievance. His own constituents in the Castleblaney, Carickmacross and Dundalk Unions had told him that nothing had been done in regard to this question; and yet question after question had been put upon the subject. For the last 43 years the population of Ireland had gone down, and although they might not be exactly starving in Ireland, they had not a lot of money. He believed Her Majesty's Government need have no fear that there would be any such thing as Irishmen coming to their shores for the purpose of entering the workhouses. He hoped the Chief Secretary would try and undo the mischief which had been done in the past towards Ireland.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.) thought that an absolutely unanswerable case had been made out in regard to this subject. He did not think that the way in which the question had been treated was very encouraging to Irish Members. It had been acknowledged that for the last 40 years there had been a grievance, and yet no step had ever been taken to remove that grievance. He happened to be the Chairman of one of the Boards of Guardians which, week after week, had these warrants before them from all parts of England, Scotland and Wales, sending to them men who had left Ireland and had contributed to the wealth of Great Britain. Every Board of Guardians in Ireland was unanimously of opinion that the present practice ought to be discontinued. He hoped the Chief Secretary would be able to hold out not merely hopes but the certainty that the grievance would be removed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said he had on several occasions expressed the opinion that in this matter Ireland had a real grievance. ["Hear, hear!"] It was a grievance of a twofold character—the sentimental and practical. With regard to the first, Irish paupers could be deported from Scotland and England into Ireland, while English and Scotch paupers could not be removed from Ireland to Scotland or England. The grievance could, it was clear, be removed by assimilating the law in Ireland to the law in England and Scotland; but this, in his opinion, would not constitute a real settlement of the question. While a considerable number of Irish paupers were annually removed from England and Scotland, in practice it would be found that if the law in Ireland were assimilated to that of England and Scotland few Englishmen or Scotchmen who became paupers in Ireland could be deported to the country of their birth. Personally he would rather see the law in England and Scotland assimilated to that in Ireland. The practical grievance was that an Irishman might have spent 30 or 40 years working in England or Scotland, but when past work he was liable to be sent back to the union in which he was born in Ireland, to become a burden on the Irish ratepayer. That was a very practical grievance, but it would only be redressed by a change in the poor law of England and Scotland. On that ground it had been impossible for the Irish Government as such to introduce a Bill dealing with the question. The Law of Settlement in Scotland was much severer in its effect upon Ireland than the English law was. Therefore the House would not be surprised to find that the number of paupers who had been deported from Scotland to Ireland within recent years, as compared with the number who had been removed from England to Ireland, was considerably greater, notwithstanding that England had a larger area than Scotland. The figures were remarkable. In 1889 the number of paupers removed to Ireland from England was 173; from Scotland, 117; 1890, from England, 154; Scotland, 132; 1891, England, 123; Scotland, 230; 1892, from England, 153; Scotland, 224; 1893, from England, 153; Scotland, 259. The yearly average was—from England, 151; but from Scotland, 192. So the House would see that, if the grievance were to be removed in an effectual and statesmanlike manner, it must be by an alteration of the laws of Scotland and England. He had proposed a Conference on the subject between the Local Government Boards of the three portions of the Kingdom. But that proposal did not bear fruit, and ultimately he entered into negotiations with the Local Government Board for Scotland, thinking any concession he got from them would not be difficult to obtain from the Local Government Board in England. The Local Government Board for Scotland had met him in a conciliatory spirit, and he was authorised to say that they were now engaged in drafting a Bill which, even if it did not meet the case completely, or go as far as he could wish, he hoped it would meet the grievances of Ireland to a considerable extent. Under the circumstances, he suggested that the discussion might now come to a conclusion pending the introduction of the Bill, and that Irish Members might bring their powerful influence to bear on the Scotch Members on their own side of the House to help them to get the best terms which, under the circumstances, it might be possible to obtain. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) agreed that it would not be desirable for the poor law system in Ireland to be assimilated to that of England and Scotland. The English and Scotch systems were of very ancient date, but the Irish system was comparatively of modern creation, dating, as it did, from the first year of Her Majesty's reign. The Law of Settlement did not exist in Ireland, and the cause of the evil of which Ireland justly complained was the stringency of the Law of Settlement in England and Scotland. The greatest hardship had been occasioned by the operation of this law, by which an Irish labourer might not acquire a settlement in a Scotch parish or an English union. If he had not acquired a settlement in the particular union on which he had become chargeable he would be sent to the parish from which he came, provided he had acquired a settlement there. The Irish population in England and Scotland was more or less a fluctuating population, and the consequence was, an unfortunate Irishman might toil for 40 or 50 of the best years of his life in England or Scotland and not acquire a status to get poor law relief from either country. He was then deported back to Ireland; all his relatives and friends there had probably disappeared, and he dropped, as it were, from the sky, to be a charge and burden upon some already impoverished poor law union in Ireland. It was quite true that successive Governments had received complaints in reference to this matter, but notwithstanding these complaints there had been no change in the law. But he thought a means had now been suggested for remedying this evil, namely, by a change in the law of England and Scotland, which if applied to the case of Irish labourers would prevent a man from being sent back in his later days to a place which knew him no more, where he had no friends to help to sustain him, after he had given the best years of his life to the service of the Sister Island. He thought that the assurance of the Chief Secretary that the Scotch and English Local Government Boards were considering this question in conference with the Irish Local Government Board was satisfactory, and he trusted that a Measure might be produced in the course of the present Session which would meet the hardship without making any great change in the Law of Settlement in England and Scotland, and without the necessity of assimilating the law in Ireland with that in England and Scotland.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) thought that after the statement of the Chief Secretary the mover of the Amendment ought not to press it to a division. The right hon. Gentleman's speech made it perfectly clear that the change which ought to be effected was a change in the law of England and Scotland. He would publicly appeal to Scotch and English Members present to assist the right hon. Gentleman in carrying out what he had stated to be his own wishes. He was rather astonished that some Scotch or English Member had not spoken in the Debate. Although the right hon. Gentleman might be anxious to terminate this Debate as soon as possible—and he did not see any reason to prolong it—he thought the right hon. Gentleman would himself be strengthened in his meritorious intentions if he had the voice of English and Scotch Members at his back. He had been thinking since the right hon. Gentleman sat down, that some hon. Member like himself might in the last resort take the initiative in this matter, and if he did not hear some satisfactory statement from at least one English and one Scotch Member, he should take upon himself to promote a memorial to the English and Scotch authorities which he hoped would be signed both by Englishmen and Scotchmen as well as Irishmen, asking that some change should be made. He ventured, however, to express the hope that before the Debate closed at least one English and one Scotch Member would take part in it and give the House some assurance that no niggardly spirit would be manifested in this matter.

Sir MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said he would gratify the wishes of the hon. Member who had just sat down. Knowing something of this question, and having taken a great interest in it, and having had a large amount of experience in the administration of the Poor Law, he could not see his way to support the foreshadowing of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Although it might sometimes appear that there was considerable hardship entailed in deporting Irishmen before they obtained a settlement in Scotland, there was practically very little hardship at all. Where there was any hardship, the case had been generally left undisturbed. What they objected to in Scotland was that at certain seasons of the year, when there was a want of labour in Ireland, large numbers of Irish labourers came across. They did not want them to become their habitual paupers and to have to support them for the rest of their lives. Surely it was very reasonable to say that having a Law of Settlement in Scotland, that law should be observed. In large centres, in cities like Glasgow, where a large number of Irishmen were continually coming on to the rates, the only thing that kept down the rates was the fear those Irishmen had of being deported to Ireland, which induced them to make themselves scarce when the district officer went round. He therefore hoped that Her Majesty's Government either this or any other Session would not attempt to alter the present law upon this subject.

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.) said that he must express his regret at hearing the observations of the hon. Gentleman opposite. As a Scotch representative he should certainly support any Measure that the Government might bring in that would remedy an acknowledged injustice. ["Hear, hear!"] If an Irishman resident in a Scotch town happened to move over the line that divided one parish from another within five years, if he became a pauper he lost his parish settlement and was liable to be deported to his parish of origin in Ireland.

Sir MARK STEWART said that that law applied equally to Scotchmen and Irishmen.

Mr. CALDWELL said that might be so, but it must be recollected that the Scotchman was in his native country whereas the Irishman was liable to be deported back to Ireland. If an Irishman had resided in Scotland for five years, in whatever parishes he might have lived he ought to acquire a Scotch domicile, that would prevent his deportation to Ireland. He thought that was a very reasonable proposition, and if the Government would bring in a Bill to make such an alteration in the law he for one would heartily support it. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down appeared to think that five years' residence by an Irishman in Scotland ought to entitle him to a Scotch settlement. But what would the hon. Gentleman think when he told him that he knew of cases in which Irishmen had been deported to Ireland after 43 years' residence in Scotland? It was absurd for the hon. Baronet the Member for Kirkcudbright to say that this constituted no hardship upon the Irish people.

Sir MARK STEWART said that what he had said was that there were no cases of hardship that were not duly considered.

Mr. FIELD asked whether the fact that an Irishman had lived 40 or 50 years in Scotland was not a hardship? [*Laughter.*]

Mr. P. C. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.) remarked that it was a great hardship upon the poorer districts in Ireland that those who had left them so many years ago should be sent back as paupers to be a burden upon the rates. In conclusion he mentioned that the adoption of the reciprocity principle would not be at all fair to Ireland, because it must be admitted that there were very few inducements to English and Scotch people to settle in Ireland. He and his Friends had every confidence after the speech of the Chief Secretary that there would soon be an end to the unfair and unjust deportation of paupers from Scotland and England to Ireland.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

OTTOMAN EMPIRE REFORMS.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words,—

> "And humbly to represent to your Majesty, as the Sovereign of many millions of Mussulman subjects, the urgent desirability of sending a special envoy to Constantinople, in order to guard not only British Imperial interests but to promote the carrying through of appropriate reforms for all the inhabitants, irrespective of race or religion, of the Ottoman Empire."

He said he need not, he was sure, apologise for moving this Amendment, as it was a worthy and fitting Amendment to move to the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. Our diplomatic arrangements at Constantinople had been watched with peculiar interest by the 50 million Mussulman subjects of the Queen. The strong leadings which the authorities at Constantinople had received from Her Majesty's Government and the other Powers of Europe had struck considerable consternation amongst those same Mussulmans. Hon. Members had read lately that the coercion of the Sultan of Turkey had been received by the Indian Mahomedans in a very different spirit to that in which it had been received by the English people, a fact which demanded the most serious consideration. ["Hear, hear!"] Hostile coercion was one thing, and friendly pressure was another. The Sultan was the head of a friendly Power, and the Mussulman population of our Empire could not understand the change of policy on our part during the last few years. That change of policy had largely lost us that prestige which England used to have in the East. He could not gather what the policy of the future was to be, but it might be said that now the Powers were in line and determined upon one definite foreign policy. The state of affairs in Turkey had now become a matter of almost European concern, almost a matter of European conference, and the successful diplomacy of our Foreign Minister—["Hear, hear!"]—diplomacy which had brought Russia into line with the rest of Europe—showed the great importance of the subject. It was well, under these circumstances, to let Turkey see that, at all events, our power and prestige was not going to lose anything by its representation in Constantinople itself, that the Sultan might expect to receive from England that courtesy which he had always received in the past. A special British Envoy at Constantinople at the present time might conclude what had been a dreadful chapter in the history of the East, and might fulfil the expectations of future permanent security and peace. At the present moment a strong man was needed, one who could go to the Sultan accredited by Her Majesty with the Sultan's knowledge that he came to Constantinople with an open mind to review matters as they stood. The British Ambassador now at Constantinople was hardly the man to conduct negotiations, which had become of a very delicate character. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] It was a matter of open notoriety that the Sultan was not, and had hardly been, on speaking terms with the Ambassador of England. Whether the Sultan had done right or wrong it was not proper that the accredited Ambassador of this country should stand in an inferior position to the messenger of any other country in Europe at Constantinople. ["Hear, hear!"] It was an open fact that, while the Ambassadors of France, Russia and Germany had had open audiences of the Sultan on any occasion they liked—in fact, the proceedings had been described by a distinguished Anglo-Turk—[*laughter, and cries of* "Name"]—as "running in and out of the Palace"—[*renewed laughter*]—the British Ambassador had isolated himself by his language and his actions from the credit and confidence of the Sultan. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] However evil the man, however monstrous the deeds of which the Sultan was, rightly or wrongly, indicted, he ventured to think that the British diplomatist who was accredited to the Porte, whether the Sultan liked or disliked him, should be in the position of a *persona grata* at the Turkish Court, and should at all times and in all places be able to uphold the interests intrusted to him. He did not know whether this was part of a new policy to give up English prestige and influence at Constantinople, nor did he know whether it was the wish of English Ministers at the present day to allow Russia to obtain the ascendency which England had always held, and which she ought always to hold. ["Hear, hear!"] It was the Russian diplomatists who were at present in high favour with the Porte, and who were able to obtain measures of reform and redress for their own countrymen which the English Ambassador could not secure. All this went far to weaken the British position. The Turks could not understand why England did not see the game Russia was playing. Russian prestige at Constantinople would mean, perhaps, command of the Dardanelles, and then England would see her naval power in the Mediterranean weakened, and her hold on Egypt and the Suez Canal and her path to India threatened. ["Hear, hear!"] As he believed that the solution of the Eastern Question was to be sought and found at Constantinople now, as it had always been, and not in the offices of the Anglo-Armenian Committee, or any other place, and as the solution of the question was now of a graver character than ever, he thought the adoption of his Amendment would be a wise and a strong step in the right direction. After all those years of failure of British diplomacy he thought there must be some weakness, not only in our administration in the East, but also in our administration at home, weakening our diplomatic relations with the Porte and destroying that Power which used to be the strongest Power at Constantinople. ["Hear, hear!"] He begged to move the Amendment.

Mr. F. G. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) formally seconded the Amendment.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said he had listened with interest to the speech just addressed to the House by the hon. Member for Altrincham, and he thought it would be admitted that the hon. Member had dealt with an exceedingly difficult and delicate question with much moderation. He did not think the gravity of the crisis in the East was fully realised at the present time. He believed that unless the greatest caution, tact, and moderation were now displayed both by Her Majesty's Government and by their representative at Constantinople, a very terrible crisis might result—one which all lovers of humanity would deplore. If once against that terrible race the religious antagonism or fanaticism were aroused in the Ottoman Empire, it would not be a few hundreds or thousands of victims who would suffer, but a very large portion of the whole Christian population of the Ottoman Empire might become the victims of another outrage. It had always been the object of persons in this country who had had to deal with the Eastern Question in a responsible position, above all things to avoid raising that terrible religious fanaticism which underlay all movements in the East. For the past two years that danger had been forgotten in this country. Language of the most reckless and unjustifiable kind had been used not only towards the Sultan but towards his Ministers, the Turkish people and the Mussulman religion, and he held that that language and the injustice with which the Turkish Government had been treated were largely responsible for the terrible events which had taken place in Asia Minor during the last few months of 1895. He did not believe it possible to find a case in history in which language so reckless had been used in regard to the Sovereign of a friendly Power as had been used towards the Sultan and his Government during the last two years. That language was absolutely unjustifiable. A very bitter feeling had in consequence sprung up towards this country in Turkey, and that feeling was deliberately increased by the various provocations on the part of the Armenian Secret Societies. They had now had for a period of twelve months, with two exceptions, comparative tranquillity throughout the Ottoman Empire. Hon. Members opposite laughed, but he was simply stating what was the fact. They seemed to forget that upon the maintenance of that tranquillity depended the lives of thousands of their fellow-beings. When in Constantinople he had the opportunity of speaking to the heads of all the great Christian communities there, and everyone said that the first object of statesmanship and diplomacy was to maintain that tranquillity. That tranquillity was due to the fact that the Sultan and the Government of Turkey had issued the most stringent orders that any person who attempted to break the peace should be immediately dealt with in the sternest way. That was a fact which ought to be recognised in this country instead of the most unmitigated abuse being lavished on the Turkish Government for things which they had actually not been guilty of. In addition to those orders it was well known that the Sultan had promulgated a number of valuable reforms which had been asked for by their Ambassador, and which had been actually made into law. Those reforms consist of the appointment of Christian sub-Governors, of Christian members of the gendarmerie, of the release of all the Armenian prisoners except those who had been convicted of acts of extreme violence, and of considerable grants of money to the relief of the Armenians themselves. The Blue-book just published for the first time showed this country in the light of a leader of a policy of coercion towards Turkey, and undoubtedly that constituted a very grave fact. His hon. Friend in his interesting speech reminded the House that Her Majesty was the Sovereign of seventy millions of Mussulman subjects, and was in fact the first Sovereign of Mussulmans in the world. It was a grave fact that the Government of this country should appear for the first time in what appeared a spirit of hostile coercion towards Turkey. The great achievement which this Blue-book had apparently been published to prove was that the Government had brought into line the Government of that Power which had always been most hostile towards Turkey, and which in recent years had thwarted every effort for the improvement of Turkey, whether the effort had been made by a Conservative or a Liberal Government in this country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth (Sir W. Harcourt) knew that his efforts, as were the efforts of the Government which succeeded him, were deliberately thwarted by the Government of Russia. When we were trying to coerce Turkey in a hostile way in conjunction with the Government of Russia, and more or less with other Governments, what was the danger? As had been pointed out, the danger on the one side was that of irritating Moslem feeling, and on the other side was a more threatening danger. With every step we took in this direction we were driving the Sultan and the Turkish Government nearer and nearer to Russia, and more and more would the Turkish Government be inclined to submit to the terms under which the Government of Russia were prepared to render any support to the Government of Turkey. It was no use shutting our eyes to this fact. If the Turkish Government consented to put the Dardanelles into the hands of Russia to-morrow that Government might have a Russian fleet and a Russian army in alliance and support. This was a great fact to which no British Government should shut its eyes. If once the Russian power was at Constantinople, then we must be prepared for the loss of our naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, and our occupation of Egypt and the Suez Canal would be absolutely useless. There would be placed under the control of Russia half a million of the finest fighting force in the world, rendering an attack on our Indian Empire certain and almost certain to be successful. That must be the consequence of placing Russia in control of Constantinople with supreme influence in the Ottoman Empire. And so he came to the Amendment of his noble Friend, and what he had said was leading up to that. He had tried to point out the gravity of the crisis, the danger that accompanied a policy of hostile coercion, not only in irritating Moslem feeling throughout the world, not only as regarded the fate of Constantinople and the existence of the Christians in Turkey. Before we could intervene for the protection of even the coast-line, these Christians might become the victims of an outburst of Moslem fanaticism. Every turn of the hostile screw would force the Sultan against his will more and more under the control of the Russian Government. He did not believe that the Sultan or any considerable portion of his subjects were anxious to fall under the power of Russia. He believed, and certainly he could speak of the majority of Turks with whom he had conversed, they dreaded and detested the power of Russia, and yet the British Government, by this policy of hostile coercion, were forcing Turkey from us and towards our great rival. His hon. Friend's Amendment referred to a Special Envoy to Constantinople, and his hon. Friend had dealt with the subject with much care and moderation of language, which he hoped to imitate. He felt it was a most delicate matter to say anything about the representatives of the Crown at the present crisis, but it was a fact well known throughout Europe that the relations between the British Ambassador and the Sovereign of Turkey were, and had been for the last two years, exceedingly strained, and the position had become almost impossible. Some people might say this was creditable to the Ambassador, and discreditable to the Sultan, but anyone who knew any thing about the ways of diplomacy would know that an Ambassador in that position was deprived of influence. Whatever he might think of the Government, it was his duty to maintain courteous diplomatic relations until he was withdrawn. It was a notorious fact that these relations were strained until the position was well nigh intolerable. This was notorious in Constantinople and known in every Chancellery in Europe. Owing to this fact the policy of this country would fail. The policy foreshadowed in the Blue-book might be good and might be necessary, but it would fail for this reason. His hon. Friend was justified in the suggestion he had made, and the Government would do well to consider it. One remark as to the way in which British policy might best become successful. A great deal had been said about the concert of Europe, but the concert of Europe up to the present had been a sad failure, and had achieved very little, and though there now seemed to be some prospect of its succeeding, he thought that was very shadowy. He would urge upon the Government a recurrence to the policy with regard to their European support and European alliances which was pursued by Lord Beaconsfield in 1878. On that occasion the Prime Minister was confronted by a crisis as difficult as at present, perhaps more pressing, and he secured strong support in Europe. He secured the support of those great Powers of Central Europe whose political interests were identical with ours, and was thus enabled in that great crisis to avoid a European war. He knew that Sir William Harcourt was very fond of indulging in attacks upon Lord Beaconsfield's policy, and trying to persuade himself that it had failed. It was not Lord Beaconsfield's policy that had failed; it was the reverse of his policy. The policy of Lord Beaconsfield was one of friendly pressure, and not of hostile coercion. The policy of Lord Beaconsfield was based on the support of the German monarchies and of Italy, but the policy of the last three years was based on the supposed but impracticable support of France and Russia.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The policy of Lord Beaconsfield in the East is not raised on this Motion, and has nothing to do with the sending of a special envoy to the Turkish Government.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT was sorry he had digressed from the exact point of the Amendment. In his opinion the best way of carrying through reforms now would be by getting the support of those Powers whose support we had before, and which was effective. He would further point out that it would be wise to institute practical supervision over the work of reform and over the administration, rather than by fantastic schemes of which they had heard so much of late. The appointment of military consuls was a practical measure of great value, and the Government would do well to adopt some such measure on the present occasion. If the Government intended their policy in the East to be successful, they must obtain the support of those Powers whose general political interests were identical with ours, and on whom we could rely in case of need. So long as this country attempted to rely on the support of Russia and France in this matter, they were bound to fail. If they once put before the Sultan a clear and definite scheme, in a friendly way, as England used to do in the past, by an Ambassador who would address himself in a diplomatic and friendly way to the Sovereign of the great Mussulman State, and if that scheme of reform got the support of Austria, which was interested as much as we were in the East, of Germany, and of Italy, with whom we could cordially co-operate, then, and then alone, in his opinion, Her Majesty's Government could hope for success in their policy with regard to Turkey and the Mussulmans and Christians of that country.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MR. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): There was one statement in the speech of the hon. Member who has just concluded in which I quite concur—namely, in the admission that the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, and whose hereditary and legitimate interest in this question we all allow—["Hear, hear!"]—made a most temperate and moderate speech. I own I feel some difficulty in understanding his position, because I gather, on the one hand, that he approved the policy of Her Majesty's Government—an admission which we were grateful to receive—but, on the other hand, he deprecated what he described as a policy of coercion of the Sultan, mainly on the ground of the consternation that it was producing or would produce among the Mahomedan inhabitants of the Indian Empire of Her Majesty. I do not believe for one moment in this consternation. ["Hear, hear!"] I have had, perhaps, as many opportunities as the hon. Member of studying the question, and I have had no evidence before me that any such consternation either already exists or is likely to be called into existence. ["Hear, hear!"] Anyhow, whether that be so or not, I would submit to the House that our policy in Europe in discharge of the responsibilities which, by treaty and otherwise, we have on many occasions assumed, ought not primarily to be dictated by considerations of the effect that policy may produce upon the inhabitants of Her Majesty's Empire in India. ["Hear, hear!"] I go further than that. Both hon. Gentlemen who have spoken have described our policy as one of hostile coercion against the Sultan, and have objected to it on those grounds. Sir, it is not our policy alone. The policy we are pursuing is not the policy of one Power, it is the policy of the combined Powers of Europe, and whether it be, in the last resort, a policy of hostile coercion or not depends, not upon us, but upon the Sultan himself. ["Hear, hear!"] It rests entirely at this moment with the Sovereign of Turkey whether that policy, which is not in its inception or design one of coercion, but which is a policy of reform in the interests of every section of the Ottoman Empire—of Turks, as well as of Christians—it rests, I say, with the Sultan himself to decide whether that policy, in the objects of which I believe there is not a man in this House who is not agreed, is successfully carried out, or whether, in consequence of obstruction, it develops and is translated into that hostile coercion to which the hon. Members so much object. ["Hear, hear!"] An Amendment has been moved by the hon. Member, the terms of which have been read and which are on record on the order paper of this House; but I cannot help calling attention to the fact that the words of the Amendment, although some attention was paid to them in the speech delivered by the Mover, were studiously ignored by the hon. Member who seconded it. The hon. Member said nothing whatever about the Amendment.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg pardon. I distinctly said that I thought it was very unfortunate that the relations between the present Ambassador and the Porte were so strained.

*MR. CURZON: I am obliged to my hon. Friend for the correction, because it enables me to bring before the House that which lies directly before it. We are not here to discuss the general question of the Ottoman Empire or the general policy of the Government. What we are discussing is an Amendment which is a Motion of want of confidence in the present representative of the Queen at Constantinople. [*Cheers.*] That is the true point and germ of this Amendment, to which I purpose to address myself. I am not going to take the line of deprecating such an attack. If the spirit which I suppose underlay the two speeches to which we have listened exists either in this House or outside—which I do not for one moment believe—I think it would be far better that that spirit of distrust should be expressed and debated on the floor of this House than that it should simmer in the Lobbies or that it should find anonymous and irresponsible expression in the Press, although I feel bound to say that I have seen no countenance in the Press on either side, and I expect to find in the Press no echo of the spirit of protest and complaint to which utterance was given in the speeches of my hon. Friends. ["Hear, hear!"] In speaking of the Ambassador at Constantinople, upon whom no one can deny that a slur is intended to be cast when a proposal is laid before us that a Special Envoy shall be sent to Constantinople to take his place—in speaking of that distinguished representative of Her Majesty, I will not shelter the Government or shield him behind the plea that he is an absent man and cannot answer for himself. Though it may be a general rule of popular acceptance that representatives of the Queen in foreign parts ought to be exempted from the criticism and the censure of this House where they cannot speak for themselves, yet I can well understand that there may be cases in which a Viceroy, or Ambassador, or Minister, even though he be absent, and even though he be subjected to compulsory silence, may yet be open to the legitimate criticism and even the animadversion of this House. But my point is that this is not one of those cases—[" Hear, hear "] —and that in the few vague phrases of my hon. Friends there is no foundation whatever for the charges which, by implication more than by direct expression, they have advanced. Now I proceed to consider those charges. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment said that we required at Constantinople a strong man with an open mind. What was the imputation that he desired to convey? It was that Sir Philip Currie was not a man of open mind and not a strong man. Well, I should imagine that if any man ever went to Constantinople with prepossessions which were likely to lead him in the direction which the hon. Members have described as the old traditional policy of this country, that man was Sir Philip Currie. He first went to Constantinople in 1876 as secretary to the mission of Lord Salisbury, and then he was secretary to the special English mission at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. If any prepossession or prejudice—which I do not admit—had existed in his mind it would have been a prepossession and prejudice of a Turcophile character, and if in the passage of events Sir Philip Currie has had to change his views—which I do not for a moment say—it is because he has since then acquired an experience which too many of us in this House lack. [*Laughter and* " Hear, hear."] The hon. Member went on to say that under the guidance of our Ambassador we had adopted a new policy, and he appeared to make Sir Philip Currie responsible for the change, as he appeared to regard it, in the direction of our policy. But if—I will not say the policy—but if the feeling upon which the policy of this country towards Turkey is founded has in any respect changed in recent years, it has not been due to any Ambassador or to any Foreign Minister, but to the action of the Turkish authorities themselves, and to the remorseless and irresistible logic of events. [" Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member made it a matter of complaint that the Sultan was not on speaking terms with the British Ambassador, and that the relations between the two were strained. I do not know from what personal experience my hon. Friend the Mover speaks.

*MR. DISRAELI: Perhaps I should say that the Ambassador was not on speaking terms with the Sultan.

*MR. CURZON: I do not object to the correction, but I do not know whether he speaks from personal experience or whether he has culled his information from more authoritative sources. [*Laughter.*] In either case the allegation of the hon. Member is not borne out by the reports received.

*MR. DISRAELI: Because they are received from the Ambassador.

*MR. CURZON: We have constant reports from the Ambassador of interviews with the Sultan in which views are expressed on both sides. We have had no difficulty in receiving from our Ambassador the opinions which the Sultan has desired to place before us, and I have no reason to suppose that the suggestions of the hon. Member are in any sense true. [*Cheers.*] He has tried to convey to us that the Ambassador of this country stands in an inferior position at Constantinople to the representatives of the other Powers. I believe that to be an unfounded and grotesque insinuation. The hon. Member has said that he cannot secure for British interests and British trade that legitimate protection which other Ambassadors secure for the subjects of their various nationalities. If British trade be the question at issue I may be allowed to say a word, because as representing the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office, I have charge of a good deal of the work, and I am bound to say that in the hands of

Sir Philip Currie, so far from detecting any inability to secure due regard for our interests, I find, on the contrary, that we have as vigilant and successful an influence applied to our concerns as we could possibly desire. [*Cheers.*] I do not desire to argue with my hon. Friends on these small points. Not having myself lately been at Constantinople—[*laughter*]—I am not in a position to argue the matter with the various emulous pilgrims—[*laughter*]—who have recently been sojourning there. But what is the moment which my hon. Friend has selected to bring this implied vote of censure on Sir Philip Currie before the House? A more inopportune moment he could not possibly have chosen. [*Cheers.*] We have just laid before the House of Commons a Blue-book, which, I venture to say, has elicited greater unanimity and satisfaction on both sides of the House than any Blue-book which in my short recollection of Parliament I can remember. For that common recognition on both sides of the House Her Majesty's Government are profoundly grateful. In speaking of the Eastern Question it does not do to be over sanguine, but I venture to say that the result of a perusal of the Blue-book is to enable us to obtain an outlook at the present moment more favourable than it has been for some time past. In these discussions, which have been taking place at Constantinople, which are now taking place, and which this Blue-book records, Sir Philip Currie has represented the Government to its entire satisfaction. [*Cheers.*] With the experience of three years behind him, with his knowledge of the Eastern Question, and with his ability and resource, he has in every respect completely and satisfactorily carried out the views of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] This is the moment which my hon. Friends choose—

*MR. DISRAELI: It is the only moment.

*MR. CURZON: That makes the case worse than it was before. The hon. Gentleman suggests that this is the only moment which they can choose. The very moment when we are within, as we hope, a near distance of reaching a satisfactory conclusion, is the only moment when the thing can be stopped, and when the concert of Europe may be broken down. This is the moment when they intervene to secure the supersession of the British representative at Constantinople. The Government see no necessity for any supersession at all. [*Cheers.*] If they were at the present moment to send out a Special Envoy to Constantinople, as has been done in entirely different circumstances on previous occasions—

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: It was done in 1876.

*MR. CURZON: In 1876 Lord Salisbury went out as Special Plenipotentiary and representative of this country to Constantinople. ["Hear, hear!"] For what purpose did he go out? He went out to take part as an Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in a European Conference which was summoned to take action at Constantinople subsequent to the Bulgarian atrocities and the Servian war, and previous to the Russian invasion. The difference between the two situations is obvious. In one case you have a European Conference in which representatives and plenipotentiaries of the Great Powers are sent out to Constantinople—["No"]—to conduct an international European Conference. In the other case you have a conference of Ambassadors at Constantinople, of persons necessarily best acquainted with the situation, possessing no initiative, charged with no powers of their own, but instructed to refer the result of their deliberations to the Powers, who will deliberate upon them and take action. A greater distinction between the two situations cannot be imagined. But the point I desired to put before the House before I was interrupted was this—that if we were at the present moment to adopt the advice of my hon. Friend, to supersede Sir Philip Currie and to send out a special envoy to Constantinople, we should not only be inflicting a most gratuitous public slur upon a distinguished representative of the Crown—[*Opposition cheers*], but we should be doing more than that; we should be taking a step that would have a very wide and unfortunate effect upon the action and the possibilities for good of Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] I venture to say that if we now adopted his advice, and if any special envoy, either in supersession of or in supplement to the British Ambassador, were sent out to Constantinople, there is no step that can be imagined which would be more calculated to weaken and to cripple the authority of Her Majesty's Government in the councils of Europe. [*Cheers.*] At the very moment when the concert of Europe has been re-established, when it is proceeding harmoniously, when the suspicions that appeared to divide its members have been removed, and when practical unanimity has been secured, we are invited to remove or to supersede or to supplement the representative of this country at the Council Board, and to acknowledge by so doing that our policy up to this point has been a mistake or a failure. On behalf of the Government I must decline for one moment to entertain any such suggestion. [*Cheers.*] The Government intend to pursue their policy, and they are satisfied with the agent who has hitherto assisted to carry it out, and we hope the House will with practical unanimity reject a proposal which, if it were accepted as part of the Address in reply to the Gracious Speech of Her Majesty, would convey both an injurious and an uncalled-for imputation upon one of our most eminent representatives in foreign parts, and would at the same time be generally interpreted as an abnegation of the responsibilities which we have assumed in the face of Europe and as a repudiation of the policy which we intend to follow and, if it be possible, to prosecute to a successful issue. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.): We on this Bench find ourselves in a situation unusual, but not disagreeable. It becomes our duty to support Her Majesty against the attacks of the irregular janissaries below the gangway. [*Laughter.*] I am not suggesting to Her Majesty's Government that they should resort to the measure which the Sultans of Turkey at an earlier period of the century took with regard to those troops, and I should not have risen at all to make any remarks, agreeing as I do with what has been said by the Under Secretary upon this occasion, except that I thought, having been myself with my colleagues acting with Sir Philip Currie at Constantinople, I ought not to be silent in repudiating this attack made upon him by the hon. Member in the motion he has submitted to the House. [*Ministerial cheers.*] For a more able, a more faithful representative than Sir Philip Currie Her Majesty has never had in her service. [*Cheers.*] What the Under Secretary has said is perfectly true. I should not describe Sir Philip Currie exactly, perhaps, as a Turcophile, in the words of the Under Secretary, but I can say of Sir Philip Currie—and I know it from my official knowledge—that he went to Constantinople full of hope and belief that by friendly representations to the Sultan of Turkey something might be done to advance reforms in that empire. He has found by experience, as every man who has gone through that experience has found, that all these hopes were disappointed. Mention has been made of a special envoy to Constantinople, as represented by Lord Salisbury in December, 1876. In the representations that were then made, the hopes then experienced, were they not entirely disappointed, and did not the whole objects of the conference fail? That the hon. Member who has moved this Amendment should not approve of the present policy of Her Majesty's Government I am not surprised, because it is, and is allowed to be, a reversal of the policy which was adopted 20 years ago by Lord Beaconsfield. The object of the hon. Member for Sheffield and the hon. Member who moved this Motion must have been that some new Commissioner should be sent to Constantinople to put more "money on the wrong horse." [*Laughter.*] I should imagine that that is to be the mission of the Special Envoy, on the ground that Sir Philip Currie has not been sufficiently lavish of the money so expended in the last 20, I might say in the last 40, years ["Hear, hear!"] No, Sir; it has become apparent to everybody now that other measures and another policy must be adopted, in hopelessness of representations of the character which have been made over and over again, and always in vain. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for Sheffield said, "Why do not you make an alliance with Austria?" Has he read the Blue-book which has just been presented? Has he perceived that when the British Government applied themselves—and properly—to Austria, the answer of Austria was—"We will make no more representations to Turkey until we have settled the methods of coercion which shall be employed to enforce those representations." Is it in that spirit that the hon. Member desires that a Special Envoy should be sent to Constantinople? That is, I am glad to know, the policy of Her Majesty's Government to-day; and if—and it is perfectly true, as the Under Secretary has said—that the recent correspondence has been received with favour, it is because it indicates that the Government of Great Britain has been labouring to induce the Powers of Europe to act on the conviction that paper remonstrances with Turkey are in vain, and always will be; and that if you intend really, in the cause of civilisation and humanity, to accomplish anything at all, you must settle among yourselves beforehand—and that, I think, Lord Salisbury has rightly laid down as the policy to be pursued—those measures of material pressure which can alone give your remonstrances any force or effect. [*Cheers.*] I agree with the Under Secretary that this is a moment, not to weaken the hands of the Government of Great Britain — [*general cheers*] — but to strengthen them in the course which we desire them to pursue. And we will be no parties on this side of the House to any attempt to cast a slur upon the agent of the Crown who is pursuing an object in which the honour of this country is involved, and by which, I believe, the cause of civilisation will be served. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not rise to continue the Debate, which has, I think, gone on for a sufficient length of time. If the right hon. Gentleman and I were to discuss at length our views of the history of the Eastern Question for the last 30 years, no doubt we should find plenty of points of difference. But on the particular point nominally before the House, a point which has been left out of sight a good deal by some of the speakers, we are absolutely at one; and I believe that there is, on the whole, hardly any difference of opinion between the two sides of the House with regard to the necessity from the public point of view, of supporting the distinguished diplomatist who is so ably representing Her Majesty at this moment at Constantinople. ["Hear, hear!"] If I am right in saying that on that point we are agreed—and after all, all other points are irrelevant to the Amendment before the House—I am not going beyond my duty in asking the House to bring this discussion to a close as soon as possible. ["Hear, hear!"] Any appearance of divergence among us to-night would, even from my hon. Friend's point of view, have a disastrous effect upon Turkey. The great point is that Turkey should understand now that all sections of opinion in England are united and in accordance with the general policy of the Powers of Europe. Against that unanimity I am convinced that there are no powers of obstruction in Turkey which could struggle successfully; and I should deprecate in the interests of Turkey itself any appearance of want of unanimity at the present time. ["Hear, hear!"] My hon. Friend seems to think that we are acting in this matter in a spirit hostile to Turkey. That is not the case. Our firm conviction is that the salvation of Turkey depends absolutely upon the acceptance of reforms by Turkey. [*Cheers.*] Turkey reformed is Turkey invulnerable. Turkey unreformed is Turkey foredoomed to speedy dissolution. [*Cheers.*] Holding that view, we separate ourselves from the people who think that in this policy we are putting ourselves in antagonism to the interests of the Turkish Empire as a whole, or to those of the Mussulman population. That being admitted—as it is, on all sides of the House—surely we shall be doing the best for the general foreign policy of this country in connection with the Eastern Question and for the interests of Europe as a whole, if we bring this particular Debate to a conclusion. If I may travel beyond the Amendment, and make an appeal to the House on the suject of the Address itself, I would suggest that I am justified in asking the House to bring the discussion on the Address to a close to-night. [*Cheers.*] I quite agree that if the question of the financial relations of Ireland had been brought on, hon. Gentlemen might justly have asked for more time. But as by general consent the Debate on that question has been deferred to a future day, I am not trespassing on the privileges of Members in asking them to bring this

Debate to a conclusion to-night, so that to-morrow we may begin the ordinary work of the Session. [*Cheers.*]

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Ragis) said he regretted that the Debate had not been carried on in the tone adopted by the Leader of the House at the end, and by his hon. Friend the Member for Altrincham at the beginning. He rose merely to remove a few misapprehensions from the mind of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who had not shown in his speech that holy calm which should characterise the utterances of Under Secretaries. The right hon Gentleman went beyond the usual confession of ignorance, which was common to all of them, for he rejoiced in his own ignorance. He stated that he had not been to Constantinople, and had no recent information, and then like the great Apollyon he went forth to slay the poor pilgrim who had gone about to get information that would be useful to the House. For his part, he held it was a virtue for an hon. Member to employ his leisure not in shooting game or other amusements, but in endeavouring to obtain information in regard to a question about to be debated in the House. He would not follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouthshire through his speech, in answer to Lord Rosebery. He would only say that the right hon. Gentleman ought to feel indebted to his hon. Friend for having afforded him the opportunity for making that answer. The right hon. Gentleman said that the great thing in dealing with Turkish matters was to state beforehand what they were going to do. The right hon. Gentleman left the country to imply that that was what was going to be done in the present case. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman had not read the Blue-book, or did not understand it, for otherwise he would see that so far from settling anything the last communications that had passed between the Powers had absolutely and completely unsettled everthing that had been settled before. The right hon. Gentleman would see on referring to the Blue-book that Lord Salisbury had written that before the Ambassadors had come to discuss the plan, and before the plan had been presented to the Sultan, the Powesr must in the first instance be agreed that in case their proposals were rejected they must use coercion. Not a single Power had agreed to that. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He regarded non-compliance in this case to mean refusal. If hon. Members would refer to the Blue-book——

*MR. SPEAKER: The details of the Blue-book are outside the present discussion.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he bowed to that ruling. He had been tempted into that line of discussion by the irregularities of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. He now came to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who was always interesting. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Motion amounted to a vote of want of confidence in Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, Under-Secretaries really never studied history. When Lord Salisbury was sent as a Special Envoy to Constantinople, while Sir Henry Elliott was Ambassador there, the same ridiculous idea seemed to have occurred to foolish people, that it was meant as a slight upon the Ambassador. Lord Derby then wrote to Sir Henry Elliott, pointing out that the appointing did not indicate in the slightest degree any want of confidence on the part of the Government in Her Majesty's representative at Constantinople. If then it was no slight on Sir Henry Elliott to send a Special Envoy to Constantinople in 1876, it was no slight on Sir Philip Currie to send a Special Envoy to Constantinople in 1897. [*Cries of* "There was a Conference then!"] There was not in 1876 a general sending out of Ambassadors to Constantinople by the Powers, it was done especially by England. There was no slur intended to be cast on Sir Henry Layard, our Ambassador at Constantinople when the First Lord of the Admiralty was sent out, nor was any slur intended to be cast upon Sir William White when Sir Henry Drummond Wolff was sent out. He thought these precedents showed that no slur whatever was cast upon the Ambassador by the Amendment. A very grave and serious crisis had been reached in the affairs of Turkey. The consultations now taking place between the Ambassadors were in effect a very serious European Conference. Surely if there was an occasion for a Special Envoy being sent out it was this. It was said that our Ambassador was not on speaking terms with the Sultan; he should prefer to say that he was on speaking terms, but that he spoke in a way not perhaps highly to be desired on the part of an Ambassador. He had presented four schemes of reform, the first of which was a failure, the second was contemptuously rejected by Russia, the third was rejected with nothing less than contempt by Austria, and the fourth had provoked a strange and unwarranted rebuff from the Russian Ambassador. Those were instances in which Sir Philip Currie had exercised what he was sure were great abilities, but had exercised them without success. It would be well, therefore, in such a crisis as this, when the moral welfare, not only of the Turks and Turkey, but of England, as well as the most important interests of Europe were involved, if we sent out to strengthen the hands of our Ambassador a Special Envoy to assist him. He joined with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, in expressing his conviction that it was necessary to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Dominions, and to introduce the necessary reforms. But he was firmly convinced that so long as they approached the only man from whom those reforms could be obtained in a spirit of insolence and arrogance, they would not succeed. A change was required in the manner rather than in the matter of the address to the Sultan. His belief was that there was every desire on the part of the Sultan to reconcile himself to Europe, and especially to England, by introducing these reforms, and he thought that whether Her Majesty's Government accepted this or any other step which might facilitate the granting of these reforms, they should take every possible means not to let the present opportunity slip.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put and agreed to amid cheers.

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty as followeth:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Councillors.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, that this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented to this House during the present Session be referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, That this House will, To morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL

SIR BENJAMIN STONE (Birmingham, E.): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said the object of the Measure was to make general, enactments which were already in force in London, Manchester, Liverpool, and other large towns.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) opposed the Bill. He was surprised that a Bill of the kind should be left in the hands of a private Member, however experienced. The Bill reversed the entire policy of the Criminal Law, throwing on a man arrested the duty of proving his innocence instead of throwing on the prosecutor the duty of proving the guilt of the accused. Was it because England and Wales were a separate entity that this Bill was to be confined to those parts of the Kingdom? If it was good for them, why was it not good for Ireland? The Bill did not seem to have the support of the Attorney General for England, for he flitted from the House when the hon. Member rose. The hon. and learned Gentleman had charge of the Amendment Bill, allowing prisoners to give evidence in their own defence. Why were they not provided for in this Bill? It was not proposed to apply the Bill to Ireland, yet the phrase "reasonably suspected" was stolen from the Irish Coercion Act. [*Nationalist laughter and cheers.*] It was quite foreign to the British Constitution, as far as his acquaintance with that instrument went. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*]

The hon. Member was still speaking at midnight, when the Debate was adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT).

Committee thereupon deferred till Thursday.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES).

Abjourned Debate on Motion for leave to bring in a Bill [21st January] further adjourned till Thursday.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY).

Committee thereupon deferred till to-morrow.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said: I promised at question time that I would, at the adjournment of the House, state the views of the Government with regard to the main business of the week. To-morrow, of course, is sacred to private Members. *Mr. T. M. Healy.* Thursday is a Government day, and, leaving license to introduce under the special Standing Order secondary Government Bills at the beginning of business, I propose to make the first Order of the Day the renewal of the Supply Rule which was in operation, and I hope successfully in operation, last Session.

DR. CLARK: As a Sessional or a Standing Order?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do not mean to press it as a Standing Order if the House objects. The second Order of the Day will be the appointment of the South African Committee, and the third Order of the Day the Supplementary Army Estimates. Of course, if the rule is carried, Supply will be taken on Friday—the Civil Service Estimates. On Monday I should propose to take the Committee on the Education Bill. A further forecast than that I cannot venture to make.

Motion agreed to.

Adjourned at Five minutes after
Twelve o'clock.

EXTRACTS FROM "VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS."

In pursuance of Standing Order No. 1, "Sittings of the House,"

I hereby nominate—

Mr. Arthur O'Connor,
Mr. John Ellis,
The Right Hon. Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley,
Mr. John Grant Lawson, and
Mr. Edmond Robert Wodehouse,

to act during this Session as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means.

WILLIAM COURT GULLY,
Speaker.

26*th January*, 1897.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 27th January 1897.

BENEFICES (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Wednesday, 10th March, till Wednesday, 26th May.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

On going into Committee of Supply:

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): On Navy Estimates, to call attention to relative strength in ships and men; and to move a Resolution.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.): On Civil Service Estimates, to call attention to the incidence of local taxation of property leased and occupied by the Government; and to move a Resolution.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): On Civil Service Estimates, to move, That this House cannot be the effectual guardian of the Revenues of the State unless the whole amount of the taxes and of various other sources of income received for the public account be either paid in or accounted for to the Exchequer.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: On Army Estimates, to call attention to the cost of the Army and the return obtained for it; and to move a Resolution.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): On Civil Service Estimates, to call attention to the inequality of the Votes and Grants for local purposes in England, Ireland, and Scotland; and to move, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the financial relations between England, Ireland, and Scotland, and to report (1) the amount and proportion of moneys expended out of the Exchequer (a) upon civil and local government services for the special use of, and (b) upon collection of revenue in England, Ireland, and Scotland respectively; and (2) how far the financial relations established by the sums so contributed and paid are equitable, having regard to the relative amount and proportion of revenue contributed to the Exchequer by the people of England, Ireland, and Scotland respectively.

MR. E. LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro): On Civil Service Estimates, to call attention to the question of Judges' retirement; and to move a Resolution.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): On Civil Service Estimates, to call attention to the question of derelicts.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: On Civil Service Estimates, to move, That it is the duty of the Foreign Office to consult European Powers having possessions in Africa as to whether they will attend a Conference at which the measures agreed to at the Berlin Conference of 1885-6 and the Brussels Conference of 1889-90, with questions appertaining thereto, shall be considered with a view to the adoption and enforcement of further measures for securing equitable treatment of the Natives of Africa.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): On Civil Service Estimates, to call attention to the conduct of the Local Government Board in taking away the power of a single elector to demand a poll at a parish meeting; and to move a Resolution.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central), in moving the Second Reading of the Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, said that the main principles of the Measure had been before the House on several occasions. In 1894 the House went to a division on the Bill he had introduced in that year, with the result that, although it was defeated by the narrow majority of 26, it met with the approval of nearly every hon. Member on the Conservative benches. He did not lay this Measure before the House in the interests of

Sheffield alone, because there was a considerable volume of public feeling in its favour, more especially among the industrial classes of the country. The Measure had been approved, among other bodies, by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, and although this Bill differed in some degree from the Bill which that body had drawn up, the members had resolved to accept it and to give it their support. Owing to unexpected circumstances the Second Reading of the Bill had come on earlier than had been anticipated, and therefore it had been rather hurriedly printed, but any necessary alterations in its phraseology could be effected in Committee. He would divide his observations upon the Measure into two parts, the first dealing with the second clause of the Bill, and then with its third clause. The second clause proposed to effect an alteration in Section 16 of the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887. That Section required that a definite indication of the country of origin should be placed upon foreign-made goods, as "Made in Germany," or "Made in France," in cases where imports bore the name or trade mark of any person or firm in this country. A feeling, however, had sprung up that, by requiring such a definite indication of the country of manufacture to be put upon the goods, we were giving a gratuitous and unnecessary advertisement to our trade competitors. ["Hear, hear!"] He entirely concurred in that feeling. What the second clause of the Bill proposed to do was to take away the necessity for a definite indication of the country of manufacture, and to substitute for it the indefinite term, "Foreign Made." He held in his hand a lamp glass which had the words "Made in Saxony" placed upon it in very small letters, so small that they could scarcely be read. The Bill proposed that the words of indication should be placed upon the goods conspicuously and indelibly. There was no necessity for him to detain the House in placing before them arguments in favour of effecting such a change in the law, because he found, from reading the speeches of hon. Members to their constituents, that many were ready to support such a change. The third clause of the Bill was, with the exception of a few alterations, the same as the Bill which he had already brought in every Session since 1888. Hon. Members would find that by the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, no indication of an article being of foreign make was required unless it bore some indication that it was made in this country. The result had been that quantities of plain goods were being imported, and that subsequently the name of some fictitious English manufacturer was placed upon them, with the result that the consumer was defrauded by having palmed off upon him an article of foreign make as being of English manufacture. That this was the case had been fully established by the evidence that had been given by the Chairman of the Board of Customs before the Committee of 1890. Such a state of things operated most injuriously upon English manufacturers, and upon the English artisans, who were dependent for their living upon their wages. He submitted that we were entitled to put a stop to such proceedings, and that this Bill did not raise the question of Protection in any degree. [*A laugh.*] He heard some hon. Member laugh, but perhaps that hon. Gentleman would accept what Mr. Gladstone had said upon the subject. In October, 1890, Mr. Gladstone wrote to a Trades Secretary:—

> "The amendment of the Merchandise Marks Act, which you are endeavouring to promote, cannot be fairly objected to on the ground that it is inconsistent with free-trade principles."

Sir JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield): Will the hon. Gentleman tell us what the Amendment was?

*Sir HOWARD VINCENT said it was his Bill which was before Parliament at the time. As he had mentioned Mr. Gladstone, he felt bound to remind the House that on November 28th, 1892, the present leader of the House wrote:

> "As far as I am able to judge, your wishes seem in principle to be perfectly legitimate. I can see nothing that is not in harmony with public policy in the main object you desire to see accomplished."

It might be urged that an inquiry by a Select Committee would meet the point. There had been such inquiries already, and, as all hon. Members knew, the appointment of a Select Committee was often a means of shelving a question. It might be that the President of the Board of Trade, who, he was persuaded was anxious to do his best to further the trading and commercial interests of the country, did not fully approve of the wording of the Bill. He was quite ready to adopt any improvement in the wording of the Measure, indeed all he was now anxious to secure was the adoption of the principle. He submitted to his hon. Friends and to hon. Members opposite that they were bound to give heed to the wishes and the desires of the working classes, who, by their organised societies had repeatedly declared that this was a matter to which they attached very great importance indeed. He earnestly hoped the House would unanimously and without a division agree to the general principle of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. AUGUSTUS GODSON (Kidderminster) said that in supporting the Bill he would say but few words, the more particularly as he understood the President of the Board of Trade was anxious to fulfil an engagement elsewhere. He felt that this Bill was an improvement upon its predecessor, and that the objections taken, not only in the House, but in the country, to the needless advertisement we gave to our foreign competitors by requiring a specific statement of the place of origin was now avoided by the proposed use of the general term, "Foreign made. His constituents were very severely hit by the difficulty of compelling foreign producers to show on the face of their goods that they were of foreign and not English make. The third clause of the Bill in a great degree put this matter right. He therefore, on their behalf, hoped the House would read the Bill a second time.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon) apologised to the House for intervening so early in this discussion, but as his hon. Friend had said, it was desirable he should be able to fulfil a public engagement elsewhere in a few minutes. His hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield had rightly said that the Bill had been somewhat hurriedly prepared. [*Opposition cheers.*] One had some right to complain that the Bill should have been distributed at so very late an hour, and that a Measure of this importance should have been thrown together—he was afraid he must use that term—in such a way as to make it perfectly impossible to understand exactly what it meant. [*Opposition cheers.*] The Bill was received at the Board of Trade at a quarter to 12. Having regard to the great importance of the subject, his hon. Friend might have given the Department a little more time to see what the Bill really did mean. So far as he had been able to understand it, if the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, were amended as his hon. Friend desired, Section 2 would read thus:—

> "All such goods, and also all goods of foreign manufacture bearing any name or trade mark, being or purporting to be the name or trade mark of any manufacturer, dealer, or trader in the United Kingdom, foreign made, are hereby prohibited to be imported into the United Kingdom."

He confessed he did not understand what that meant. [*A laugh.*] He gathered from his speech that what his hon. Friend wished to do was to get rid of the definite mark of origin and to substitute for that the words "foreign made." [Sir H. Vincent: "Hear, hear!"] That was a perfectly fair and legitimate proposition to make, but that was not the proposition made in the Bill. His hon. Friend suggested that Amendments should be made in Committee; but before they read the Bill a second time they ought to know how it was to be altered to be in conformity with the desires of his hon. Friend. He had a good deal of sympathy with the desire expressed by his hon. Friend in Section 2 of the Bill. He was, and had been for a long time, of opinion that the marking of goods with the definite country of origin had been a most excellent advertisement of our foreign rivals—[*cheers*]—and if time permitted, and it were necessary, he believed he could give to the House some illustrations of how it had worked in the direction he named. Certainly the words "foreign made" would not have so bad an effect, but still he would like his hon. Friend to consider whether or not, even if the law were altered in the direction he desired, it would not still be teaching the people at home and abroad that if they wanted to buy articles at a low price—and some of them very good too—["hear, hear"]—they had a very large market in foreign countries. There were defects in the present law, and he thought the time had arrived when they ought to consider what had been the operation of the Act. ["Hear, hear!"] This had been pressed upon him from several quarters of the House, and his hon. Friend the Member for Islington intended to ask him to-morrow whether the Government would hold an Inquiry by a Select Committee as to the working of the Act. He hoped to be able to reply that the Government would grant a Committee, and he suggested to his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield that he should not proceed further with the Bill to-day in order that they might be perfectly free-handed, that the Committee might be able to consider the whole question and perhaps give some extremely useful hints to the hon. Gentleman in regard to his desire to legislate. He knew his hon. Friend had only one object at heart, and that was to secure fair and proper treatment for English-made goods. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the suggestions he had made were not in any sense protective. They might, however, be unwise although not protective, and if he might offer his advice to the hon. Gentleman and those who agreed with him, he would suggest an alternative—namely, that English-made goods should be stamped "English made." ["Hear, hear!"] He was perfectly certain that if our manufacturers were to adopt a system of that kind—one which some were now adopting with advantage—and thus teach our customers that if they wanted a really good and useful article they must come to England for them, they would probably do more service than this Bill would do. He did not wish to express any definite conclusion upon the proposals of his hon. Friend, except this—that as far as they were contained in the Bill they were impossible to understand, and in his opinion absolutely unworkable. Being 264th, or something like that, in the ballot, his hon. Friend did not expect to secure so good an opportunity as the present to bring forward his Bill. Having this opportunity he seized it, but in seizing it he had not devoted quite as much time to the preparation of the Bill as was desirable. He appealed to his hon. Friend to consent either to a Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate or to some other Motion in connection with the appointment of a Select Committee, and that he would not proceed with the Bill until an opportunity had been given to the House of considering fully and carefully what had been the operation of the existing Act. If it should be found that the present law had been evaded the defect might be remedied; or, if it were shown that the law ought to be materially changed, then that change could be effected after full opportunity had been given of calling evidence on the subject and of hearing all that could be said about it. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir HOWARD VINCENT asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he would guarantee that the Bill should be referred to the Select Committee which he proposed to appoint. He understood that it was the practice of the House that a Bill could not be referred to a Select Committee until it was read a second time; if that was so and the rule was adhered to in this case he should feel obliged to go to a Division.

Mr. RITCHIE replied that he believed he did not say, and he certainly did not intend to say, that this Bill should be so referred. What he did propose was that the whole question should be referred to a Select Committee with the view of ascertaining what had been the operation of the present Merchandise Marks Act, and in what way, if any, it was desirable to amend it. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Sir HOWARD VINCENT said that, in the circumstances, and having regard to the resolutions passed by the United Trades Congress, he felt bound to proceed to a Division.

Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said the right hon. Gentleman had relieved him of the necessity of saying much with regard to the Bill. He had noticed, in the first place, that it would be quite impossible to proceed with the Bill upon the short notice which had been given. The Bill was a new one, and it had been distributed to the Members of the House only that morning. It had never been seen in the country, and it proposed to make a perfect revolution in British commerce and to do so without adequate notice. ["Hear, hear!"] Under these circumstances he should have thought that the Member for Sheffield would have seen that it was quite futile to ask the House to proceed with the Bill in the absence of any information from the country on the subject. The President of the Board of Trade had also made what he believed to be an exceedingly valuable admission with regard to the present Merchandise Marks Act—that it was injuring British trade.

MR. RITCHIE said that what he had stated was his own personal opinion. He had often said that the Act was injurious to British trade, and he said so still; he had always been of that opinion.

MR. BRYCE said he was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman was of that opinion. He himself believed that the present Act was injuring British trade, and he had had considerable information confirming that impression. There was clearly, therefore, a strong case for inquiry. The President of the Board of Trade had made another observation which went to the root of the Bill. He said that the Bill would probably extend the mischief which the present law did. Instead of specifying the particular place of origin, the Bill, according to the speech of the hon. Member for Sheffield, would substitute the words "foreign made" generally for any indication of specific origin. That would greatly increase the present mischief, because the Bill would apply far more largely to all goods, whereas the present law applied only to goods which purported to bear on the face of them something showing that they were not made in England. ["Hear, hear!"] For these reasons, without going into the details of the Bill, upon which a great deal might be said as to the practical impossibility of carrying it out and the extreme difficulty which would be imposed on the Commissioners of Customs, he thought it was not possible to read the Bill a second time. ["Hear, hear."] The Committee, when appointed, would go to the root of the whole question and would have to examine into the hypothesis, which had not yet been proved that British consumers always desired to buy British goods instead of foreign. ["Hear, hear!"] A great many British customers had told him that it was within their knowledge as dealers that it was a matter of perfect indifference to the buyer where the goods were made so long as they were good and cheap. If, therefore, the hon. Member desired to make good the ground of his Bill he must show that British customers desired to have British goods in preference to foreign. He understood from the President of the Board of Trade that it was his intention to move for the appointment of a Select Committee, to whom the whole matter should be referred, with the view of bringing all the facts in regard to the existing law within the cognisance of that Committee, and that the best evidence of the mercantile community might be laid before them. He believed that an inquiry of that kind would dissipate many of the erroneous ideas that now existed. ["Hear."]

*MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) thought it was gratifying to find that at last one of the chief supporters of the Merchandise Marks Act had come to realise that that piece of legislation was exceedingly foolish and damaging. ["Hear, hear!"] For his own part he would prefer that the marking of foreign goods should be abolished altogether. The present proposal was simply to mark all foreign goods, as far as possible, with the words "foreign made." It was true that the Bill suggested a somewhat simpler mode of indicating the foreign origin of goods, yet it practically served the same purpose of announcing to all the world, to the injury of our own trade and merchants, that we were buying foreign goods. He believed that no one would be prevented from buying foreign-made articles for their own use, if those articles suited them and were cheap. ["Hear, hear!"] One result of marking foreign goods had been to enlighten people that articles which they had previously thought were of English make were really of English manufacture; and, at the same time to convince them that the prejudice entertained against some foreign goods was unjustifiable. The direct effect of this was to extend the trade in foreign-made goods. ["Hear, hear!"] Those Acts also tended to interfere very seriously with an important branch of our import and export trade. A large number of merchants did an immense trade in importing foreign goods and materials from all parts, and re-exporting them to all quarters of the world, together with English-made articles. ["Hear, hear!"] But the effect of legislation of this kind would be to show foreigners, who came to London for goods, where they could get them, and ship them direct from the particular places of manufacture, and it did not require much shrewdness to perceive how prejudicially this would affect the commerce and shipping trade of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] The recent development of Hamburg was due to a large extent to reasons of this kind. By passing such Bills they would be really playing the game of foreign countries. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, such laws operated against the sale of goods of our own manufacture, for the more traders were induced to come to this country to buy, the more chance there was of their purchasing English-made goods. ["Hear, hear!"] It had already been made an offence to sell to a person a foreign-made article as an article of English make, and there was no necessity to proceed further than that. If English manufacturers would always stand by their own names and stamp their own goods, they would have the best possible protection against the foreigner. ["Hear, hear!"] When people bought foreign goods they did so because they were cheaper and more fitted to the particular purpose they had in view.

*Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Are they better?

*Mr. WHITTAKER said that in some cases they were, and in other cases not, but they were bought because they were cheap and suited the customer. British manufacturers must recognise this fact and meet it. ["Hear, hear!"] How many of those who supported this kind of legislation thought of whence came the sugar they used, or where the cloth of the coat they wore was woven, or where the paper of the books and newspapers they read was manufactured? This Bill was protection in disguise, because the object aimed at was to induce the people of this country, by fictitious means and prejudice, not to buy a foreign-made article. But it was protection that failed—as protection usually did. It had failed to keep out the foreign-made article. The object of the Legislature was to prevent the sale of foreign-made goods in England. The sale had grown since this Act was passed, and had grown very largely, owing to the advertisement which was thus given to them. It was damaging—as protection must be—to their own reputation if they announced that these articles were foreign-made. It was an announcement that they were not making them. It was damaging—as protection was—because it interfered with and disturbed the free course of trade. All this outcry that had been raised against the purchase of foreign goods and against German competition practically amounted to crying "stinking fish." It practically amounted to a depreciation of their own manufactures and their own articles. They had an enormous trade all over the world, and here they were going into fits almost because a small quantity of articles was sold here in competition with their own. They were announcing to the world that other people were very largely buying elsewhere, and the effect of the announcement was to send other people to buy there. They were seriously damaging their own trade, and discounting their own position by this outcry that was being raised against the damage that was done to them. How would this particular measure help them abroad? It was in the foreign markets of the world where they had foreign competition most seriously. If they were beaten at home, how would they get on in other markets and in their colonies throughout the world? This Merchandise Marks Act would not help them at all in those countries. Reference had been made to the publication, "Made in Germany," which had been circulated very largely. A more misleading, a more inaccurate and a more discreditable publication, he ventured to say, had never been published on trade questions in this country. As a matter of fact, anyone who would refer to the Board of Trade returns for December giving the returns for the last year, and compare those returns with the figures of the two previous years—thus getting the returns of three years—would find that in the various textile departments the exports to Germany had been much larger during the last year than in either of the previous years. Then the competition with Germany, and with other foreign countries, was not to be defeated by devices of this kind. They could only beat their competitors by superior skill, superior enterprise, superior industry and superior taste; and it was only by being brought face to face with their competitors that they were stimulated to do their best in these matters. If they attempted to mask the competition by keeping out things that were competing seriously with them elsewhere, these goods were not brought to the notice of their workpeople and manufacturers as they otherwise would do, and they would not make that effort they would otherwise do. It was a very misleading thing to create an impression that everything was *bonâ fide* and of the very best that was made in this country, and that articles that were made abroad were rubbish and worthless. A great deal of rubbish was made in Sheffield and in Birmingham, but it got the English brand upon it, and was sent out to do injury to their trade in foreign markets. They had got to face the reality that good as well as bad articles were made in foreign countries. He wanted to get rid of this foreign mark altogether, because it was mere tinkering, and would be of no advantage whatever.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he had hoped, after the President of the Board of Trade had declared, upon his official authority, that this Bill was unworkable and impracticable and impossible, and had given an intimation, which was, he thought, acceptable to the House generally, that the whole subject should be dealt with by an inquiry, his hon. Friend would not have persisted in pushing forward this Measure. He thought no one could have listened to the general discussion without feeling that the position taken up by the President of the Board of Trade had been completely vindicated, and that what was necessary at the present time was the fullest inquiry as to the effect and operation of the 1887 Act. In the first place, it was generally admitted that there were many Amendments which ought to be made in order to make that Act practically operative. They knew perfectly well that at the present time the Act was evaded by many means. On the other hand, he was quite sure that the facts which had been stated to the House led them to the conclusion that, in their own interest and in the interest of their own trade and commerce, it was absolutely necessary that they should trace what had been the effect of the Act and how far it might have injuriously affected that trade. Under these circumstances he had intended to move an Amendment in favour of inquiry, but, having regard to the intimation of the President of the Board of Trade, he should venture to move the adjournment of the Debate. He trusted his hon. Friend would be satisfied that the assurance given would be advantageous to the object he had in view, and that, on the other hand, they should escape the manifold evils which had been prophesied if they legislated in the direction he desired. He did not approach this subject hostilely to his hon. Friend. He was a member of the original Committee which recommended legislation, and he remembered well the evidence they then received that numerous frauds and acts of injustice were perpetrated upon traders in this country. He thought that, so far as it had been effective in the prevention of fraud, the Act had been beneficial. The question was, whether the Act had been effective to that extent, and whether it had brought with it some evils which might be removed by future legislation. He was convinced that the merchants and manufacturers and workpeople of this country simply desired a fair field in the competition with their opponents in other countries. He did not think there was any general desire whatever for protection, in the narrower sense of the term, as apart from protection from fraud, to which they were justly entitled. No one could be familiar with the operation of this Act without feeling that it had placed—whatever its advantages—a great restriction on dealing with commodities introduced from abroad. He wished to bear his tribute, from a large experience of the Customs House authorities, to the excellence of their general administration in dealing with this matter; but no one had been more impressed than the Customs House authorities themselves with the difficulty of doing it. This Act had been a considerable impediment to the operations of trade, and that was an evil which they should try to limit, and, if possible, to remove. Then he would point out to the House that the cost of its administration had been very great, both to the nation and to the merchants. Then, again, they ought to try and make an amendment and, if possible, some limitation. Again, other countries had, in some ways, retaliated upon their Merchandise Marks Act. He ventured to say that, especially in their dealings with Spain, and in the difficulty of obtaining good trade treaties, what had occurred in relation to the Merchandise Marks Act had greatly aggravated the situation, and had produced much retaliation on the part of the Spanish Customs House in their official trade relations with this country. Whether this Act had been altogether effective, or whether it did not need very great amendment, if it was to continue in operation, was a matter for inquiry. There was a general misapprehension with regard to the Act itself. There was a general belief that all goods coming into this country had to be marked. It was said that, as a matter of fact, many goods were brought into the country without any mark, and after they were brought safely through the Customs House they were marked as of English origin. That was one of the defects which must be dealt with. If it was the case that goods were so brought in that great fraud was committed, the fraud existed after their introduction into this country, and in defiance of the Act. In that respect he thought in many cases great injustice was done to our people. Then again there was the question how the goods were marked. He had been consulted as to evasions of the Act, the packages being stamped, but upon the sorting out of the individual contents they were not marked at all. But a great disadvantage in connection with the Act was this, that in seeking to protect our own trade we were advertising the trade of those who dealt with us. ["Hear, hear!"] Had Members watched that important class of statistics in reference to re-exports of foreign and colonial merchandise? In reference to our colonial trade he did not hesitate to say these statistics were significant, and induced most serious considerations. Anyone familiar with the subject, and who knew of the increased embarrassments and difficulties shippers and merchants had to contend with—he was not speaking so much of maunfacturers—and who read these statistics in connection with the re-export trade, knew that foreign bottoms were more engaged to carry goods from foreign countries to the centres of consumption.

*Sɪʀ HOWARD VINCENT: The bounty system.

Sɪʀ ALBERT ROLLIT said this was not merely due to the bounty system; there was a plurality of causes. It was a fact that the opening of the Suez Canal had altered trade routes, and there had been a re-establishment to some extent of old distributive centres, such as Antwerp, Hamburg, and Venice, which was becoming much more like the Venice of the past. Other causes for this might also be pointed out, among them the neglect of river conservators and the want of proper dock accommodation; and among the causes was this, that we had indicated to foreign rivals the places where they could obtain goods, so that England was becoming less the emporium for the world than she had been in the past. For these reasons, and he did not say they were all, this question had a wider aspect. With the changed conditions of trade, the departure of some of our trade to foreign ports, it was well there should be an inquiry in the first instance. Here was a Bill impracticable from the point of view of the President of the Board of Trade. The desire of those who would have all goods marked was impracticable, and with the fullest acknowledgment of the energy and ability his hon. Friend had brought to bear on this subject as affecting British trade, he thought it would be the best course to inquire, before proceeding to an Amendment of the Act, as to the means for stopping fraud while not inflicting injury on British trade. He moved the adjournment of the Debate.

Mʀ. THOMAS LOUGH (Islington, W.) rose to second the adjournment Motion, because he thought that would be taking the easiest way of getting rid of the question, but if there was a general view that a decision on the Bill should be arrived at he would not stand in the way.

*Mʀ. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member desires to second the Motion he can do so.

Mʀ. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he would second the Motion. His name was on the back of the Bill—[*laughter*]—but he was induced to take this course after what he had heard from the hon. Member for Islington (Sir

Albert Rollit) whom he regarded as an authority upon the subject, and with whom he was well acquainted in connection with the proceedings of Chambers of Commerce. The hon. Member's observations were very pertinent to the question. Although he was in favour of protecting our own trade from unfair foreign competition, which undoubtedly existed, at the same time he believed the matter required inquiry. He was not a protectionist, but our own traders should have fair play, and if this discussion induced the Government to take up the consideration of this subject, then it would have served a very useful purpose. Under the circumstances, he thought the most useful course would be to adjourn the Debate, having in mind what the President of the Board of Trade had said, and so he had pleasure in seconding the Motion.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.) said he had pleasure in appearing again in the favourite part of supporter of the Government, as he had during the Debates on the Address against various sections of the followers of Her Majesty's Government, who did not approve of the course their Leaders had pursued. In the first of these Wednesday debates they seemed to be in exactly the same position. He had supported the Government against the Church Party, against their Irish supporters and other sections, and now he felt bound to support them against the hon. Member for Sheffield. The hon. Gentleman had not succeeded in obtaining the approbation of the Government for his scheme, the Bill had been pronounced impracticable and impossible by the President of the Board of Trade. That was a definite issue for the House to decide. The hon. Member for Islington, who had, perhaps, a larger knowledge of the conditions of commerce in the country than any other Member in the House, had equally pronounced against the Bill, though, to be sure, he did not come to a very logical conclusion when he moved the adjournment of the Debate. A complaint frequently made was that the House had not sufficient time for the transaction of necessary and important business. Why then keep on the Order Book for consideration a Bill which, by almost unanimous consent, was declared impracticable and unworkable? ["Hear, hear!"] Let the House at all events get rid of this Bill from its Order Book, in order that Bills that were possible and practicable might be proceeded with. The opinion of the House should be taken on the Bill, unless the hon. Member for Sheffield took the course pressed upon him by his friends, and withdrew his Bill. He had no wish to put the hon. Member in the invidious position of having his Bill negatived.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: It might be carried. [*Laughter.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT would not contemplate that as a probability. He wished to assist the Government to let the hon. Member down easily. He had been told that the hon. Member had been good enough to quote him as an authority in support of the Bill.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: No, the Leader of the House.

MR. BRYCE said the hon. Member referred to the Leader of the Opposition.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: No, the Leader of the House.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT did not understand how the hon. Member could be under the impression that he had ever given countenance to the principle of the Bill. He had always thought the principle of the Merchandise Marks Bill to be unsound, and the effect had been, he believed, extremely injurious to British trade. He had received representations from most important commercial centres in the country as to its injurious effect on the shipping trade of this country in one of its most important branches—viz., the transfer trade in foreign commodities. No doubt the Suez Canal had been in many respects very advantageous to the trade of this country, but as regarded what was called the emporium trade, a good deal of commerce which used to come to London to be distributed now goes directly to ports in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. This matter must be familiar to anyone who paid any attention to trade matters. The particular policy intended by the hon. Member for Sheffield to be an advantage to the trade of this country had, he believed, in operation, an exactly opposite result. The colonies and various parts of the world were informed that English merchants had been in the habit of procuring goods required wherever they could get them best and cheapest. Under the auspices of the hon. Member for Sheffield these goods were marked with their place of origin, and so traders went direct to the foreign manufacturers—["hear, hear!"]—and the transfer trade was largely affected. It would be observed that, while there was recently a large increase in the export trade of this country, the transfer trade showed a serious diminution. This was a very important matter for consideration, and he, therefore, thought the inquiry proposed was a very proper one in order to ascertain exactly what had been the operation of this sort of legislation, and how far the complaints of the shipping industry were well founded. Meantime, this Bill should be disposed of, either by the hon. Member withdrawing it or by the House expressing an opinion upon it. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) found himself in the unusual but not unpleasant position of agreeing with the right hon. Gentleman in his support of the Government. He thought his hon. Friend had not been able to give his usual care to the Bill, and confessed that he was not able to attach any meaning to the operative clause. He quite agreed with his hon. Friend when he said that there was no protection in his mind, but he believed that there was—if he did not wrongly interpret the sentiments of many hon. Members—an underlying desire to restrict commercial intercourse. What he was anxious to see was free commercial intercourse between all the countries of the world. He did not desire that the markets of any country should be confined to the limits of that country. The tendency of this legislation was dangerous, and it ought to be carefully and most narrowly watched.

*MR. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that the question now before the House is the Adjournment of the Debate.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL considered that the Bill, if passed in its present form, would be injurious to trade, and that therefore more time should be given for discussion. It would be especially injurious to the whole of the carrying trade of this country. No one could doubt for one moment that their railway traffic gave employment to a large amount of labour of the highest and best possible class, and he believed any legislation which would impede the progress either of their mercantile marine or their railway systems must be highly injurious to the wage-earning classes of this country. That was one of his most serious objections to this class of legislation. He hoped they would not proceed rashly without further consideration of the question, and he therefore supported the proposal for the Adjournment of the Debate.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT was willing to withdraw his proposal for the Adjournment of the Debate so that the discussion should not be restricted to that particular question.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. LOUGH was one of those who gave the hon. Member for Sheffield credit for good intentions in this commercial legislation, but what he had always feared, and what the hon. Gentleman's action had confirmed was, that he had not got much commercial experience. He did not think the Members of the House were ever placed in a more ridiculous position than at that moment, and what they were doing reduced legislation almost to a farce. The hon. Member had been told by his Leader that the Bill was unintelligible, and he had admitted himself that in the form in which it was printed it was unintelligible.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I said a few words were wanted.

MR. LOUGH said it was always a few words that were wanted. Two opportunities had been given the hon. Member to withdraw the Bill, one by his Leader and another by a Gentleman whose name was on the back of the Bill, but he had declined to accept of either, and insisted on carrying the discussion forward. He thought a protest ought to be made against their being called upon to discuss the Bill under such circumstances. Questions of great importance had been raised, and he desired to say a word or two as to these. The hon. Member had spoken of the number of foreign goods which were to be found in the shops in this country. But had he never noticed the large quantities of English goods which were to be met with in the shops abroad? Did he not think that he would do more harm by excluding these English goods from the shops abroad than he would do good by excluding the few foreign articles that came over here? The question of the extent to which foreign trade had been interfered with by this legislation had been mentioned by the hon. Member for South Islington and the Leader of the Opposition. Neither of those Gentlemen gave statistics, and he could supply figures of a most startling nature to the House. They knew that the last year had been a good year for business. There had been an increase both in the exports from and the imports into this country; therefore, in the particular branch of commerce which this legislation touched, they ought to look for an increase also. If the increase in the re-exports was proportionate to the other increase of British commerce, they would find an increase of millions in the business of re-exports in this country. But this branch of commerce last year showed a reduction of over £3,000,000. If the hon. Member opposite were an emissary of those foreign houses whose trade he wished to extinguish he could not pursue the interests of the firms he represented more successfully than he did now by the promotion of such legislation. What was the object of the Bill? It was an attempt to amend the Act of 1887. That Act was not altogether bad, but yet it was marked with the fault that all this commercial legislation had. What were the objects of the Act of 1887? They were two. One was to stamp out fraud; the other was to stamp out the foreigner. That was what they were always doing. They never proceeded straight in this legislation of theirs against fraud. They always wanted to insinuate that the rogue was abroad, whereas he was generally found at home. Most of the fraudulent marking of foreign goods and adulteration took place at home; but in their legislation, instead of striking at the fraud where it existed, they turned aside and hit the foreigner. That was the reason why all the legislation of this kind was so bad, and why it always failed in the object they had in view. He thought the true view of the Bill was that it was a cry of despair. It was an admission, coming from the authors of the Bill, that the whole legislation itself was a failure. The Bill was unintelligible in its present shape, it was introduced without notice, and the hon. Member was not able to defend it. He thought they ought to arrive at a decision on this matter once for all, and if the House would only consider the large interests at stake it would feel that the commerce of this country must not be lightly interfered with in this way. The hon. Member seemed to think that people would take any goods if they were produced in England, but that was not the case. If English manufacturers and merchants would only produce goods of the same standard as those produced abroad they would get that trade they were so anxious for, but, unless they did so, no matter what legislation was passed by that House, they would not be able to secure the trade for them.

*MR. ROBERT PURVIS (Peterborough) considered that the Bill was, at any rate, an honest attempt to prevent fraud. The hon. Member for Sheffield had discussed the state of the present law under the Merchandise Marks Act, especially with reference to the matter of printing, and it seemed to be generally admitted that there was really a fault in the existing law. It was ludicrous to argue in favour of a system under which the law was complied with by printing so small that it could only be read with the aid of a microscope or magnifying glass. He sympathised with the views of the hon. Member for Sheffield, but, in the circumstances described by the President of the Board of Trade, he felt, with great regret, that he must vote against the hon. Member. To vote with him would be to vote for a Bill which had only just been printed. He trusted that the hon. Member for Sheffield would take the course recommended by the President of the Board of Trade.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) agreed that it was no doubt hard upon the President of the Board of Trade to be asked to come to a decision upon a Measure which he had had no real opportunity of considering. It might be well to adopt the principle that no measure should be submitted for Second Reading until it had been in the hands of Members for some few days. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill of his hon. Friend was open to criticism in some respects. The second clause, for example, proposed a somewhat reactionary step. [*Laughter.*]

Of course, he did not object to reaction upon principle. [*Laughter.*] But, being an advocate of preferential and differential rates, he thought it was highly important that the place of origin of every article that came into the country should be clearly indicated. It might happen that future legislation would establish preferential rates in respect of goods coming from the colonies and countries which consented to give reciprocal facilities to British trade. It might be decided at a future time that goods coming, say, from Germany should be subjected to the payment of a higher tariff than goods coming from the great free trade country of Turkey, the only other free trade country besides England in Europe. [Mr. MUNDELLA: "No, there are Denmark and Holland!"] He certainly could not admit Holland, and he was not sure that he could admit even Denmark as a free trade country. Therefore he held that it was desirable that goods should be marked with the name of the place from which they came; but the proposal of his hon. Friend was to classify all foreign goods, whatever their origin, under the designation of "foreign-made." The President of the Board of Trade took exception to the Bill on the ground that instead of hitting the foreigner it would hit the English trader. Surely if an English trader was guilty of fraud he did not deserve any protection. [Mr. RITCHIE said that he did not mean to convey that an English trader guilty of fraud should be protected.] As long as the law was impartially administered, no person carrying on a trade could reasonably complain because he was obliged to indicate on the goods he sold the place of their manufacture. The Leader of the Opposition, he understood, did not mind where an article came from or how many thousands of British workmen were unemployed—[*cries of* "Oh!"]—as long as the price which the consumer had to pay was not increased. [Sir W. HARCOURT protested against the right hon. Gentleman's interpretation of his observations.] He believed the right hon. Gentleman had said that as long as people had cheap food it was a matter of indifference to him whether that food was produced in this country or not. [Sir W. HARCOURT: "What I said was that I was in favour of cheap food for the people and against any change in the law for the purpose of making food dear."] The doctrine of cheapness of which the right hon. Gentleman had constituted himself the apostle came to this—that the House ought not to adopt any legislation which was likely to promote employment in this country, if that legislation would increase the cost of any article of consumption. For his part he was not prepared to subscribe to that doctrine. Some of his hon. Friends, he knew, objected altogether to legislation of this kind. For example, what his hon. Friend near him (Sir A. Rollit) would like to see was the repeal of all measures of this kind. [Sir A. ROLLIT observed that his right hon. Friend was mistaken, and that he had said nothing to indicate that he held such an opinion.] He had noticed that some of his hon. Friends would like to go a great deal further, and that many who supported legislation of this kind did so because they thought that it was as far as their constituents and public opinion were prepared to go. [*Ironical cheers.*] His own view was that the straightforward way of dealing with these questions would be to put a duty on the foreign article, and to say exactly why they did it. [*Ironical cheers.*] But in the meantime they had better take half a loaf rather than no bread. He remembered a proposal made in connection with these Acts in regard to the labelling of fruit and mutton chops. [*Laughter.*] Undoubtedly the labelling of consignments of meat would be perfectly reasonable, and a mutton chop must be cut from a larger portion of the animal. In the so-called free-trade country of Denmark that very process was followed. He contented himself, however, by saying that if the object of Parliament was to place what were called legitimate and reasonable impediments in the way of competing foreign products, it would be far better to do so by means of duties levied at the ports rather than by the roundabout methods which were so largely favoured. He should be in favour of amending the Bill of his hon. Friend very considerably. He thought that the mark "foreign made" was decidedly less effective than the compulsory declaration of the place of origin. The right hon. Member created considerable amusement by taking a pencil out of his pocket, but he did not know whether it was declared to have been made in Germany. He did not get the pencil from any Government Department, so probably it was not made in Germany. [*Laughter.*] On examination, however, he found it was declared to have been "made in Bavaria." [*Laughter, ironical cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Shame!"] It had been conveyed to him in the ordinary course of trade without any rational alternative being afforded to him. The lead mines with which he was personally acquainted in the North of England had been shut down in consequence of this foreign competition which was now engaging the attention of the House. His hon. Friend said that all the pencils provided at the public expense for the use of the libraries in Parliament were of foreign make. [VOICES: "No;" "The best only!" *and* "No, not the best only!"] [At this point Sir H. Vincent handed the right hon. Gentleman a pencil which he said was provided by the authorities of the House. It was branded "Faber, Bavaria," and, further, it had the crown and "V.R." on each side of it, and it was also branded "Civil Service." The right hon. Gentleman passed the pencil back to Sir H. Vincent, but Mr. Ritchie rose from his seat and intercepted the pencil, placing it in his pocket, amid general laughter.] This, then, he continued, was a pencil supplied to a Minister of the Crown at public expense. He was not complaining of this supply, but it would be better if the authorities endeavoured to obtain the English-made article. No rational alternative was offered, however, because the lead industry of this country had been practically crushed by foreign competition.

MR. J. McLEOD (Sutherland): No; it is bad quality.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said the hon. Member could not be aware of the intense depression which prevailed in many districts where the lead industry had been a most thriving branch of our trade. Mines had been shut down because the fellow-countrymen of the lead workers, headed by Ministers of the Crown, indulged in the luxury of foreign-made goods. He thought that his hon. Friend in charge of the Bill would do well not to press it forward hastily, especially when a fair opportunity of considering it had not been given. By postponing the Bill now a solution of the question might in the long run be obtained.

*MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said that his hon. Friend founded this Bill on the statements made before a Select Committee which inquired into the question in 1890. But the House should be told that the Committee all but unanimously condemned the Measure then before the House, while it practically condemned the present Bill in advance. He had only received a copy of the Bill before coming down to the House, and he thought it was extraordinary that the House should be asked to debate a Measure affecting the importation of £440,000,000 worth of goods from all parts of the world when the merchants of the country had not had an opportunity to examine and consider its provisions. Ever since the passing of the Merchandise Marks Act of 1887 the hon. Member had been trying to change the whole character of that legislation. The object of that legislation was solely confined to the prevention of fraud, to stop fraudulent marking of goods. It had nothing to do with the origin of the goods; but in the Committee of 1887 words giving certain powers to the Customs in the case of goods marked in English, of requiring a declaration of the place of origin were inserted in the Act, and most mischievous they had been in their operation. But a very small proportion of the goods that came into the country were marked with the place of origin. Nobody who sent goods to this country, if he described them at all, described them in a foreign language, but in English, and so the words "Made in Germany" appeared upon them. That the hon. Gentleman realised how mischievously the words of the section had operated was shown by the complete change of front he had made. Every year until this year the hon. Gentleman had brought in a Bill for a compulsory mark of origin being placed upon foreign goods; now he abandoned that position and proposed to substitute the words "foreign made." England had been up to this time the depôt market of the world. Frenchmen, Germans, Austrians, our own colonists, and United States people had come to the English market, say, to buy gloves. They found ranged in a row French, German, Austrian, and English gloves, and they bought the whole range; but they had learnt now, since gloves were marked with the country of origin, to go straight to France, Germany, and Austria for their supplies, and the result had been loss of trade to the English trader. Did the hon. Member intend that colonial produce should bear the words "foreign made?" If the hon. Gentleman had any experience of trade—which fortunately for him he had not—he would know that the whole prejudice of the fair sex was in favour of French manufactures. ["No, no, no," *from* Sir HOWARD VINCENT.] Yes; they liked Paris bonnets, Paris hats, Paris silks and ribands, and Paris gloves. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] His hon. Friend never realised—he had often tried to teach him, but he was not an apt scholar—that the manufactures of one country were the raw material of another. Take the glossy silk hat with which the hon. Gentleman came down to the House. The whole covering of the British hat was made in France. [Sir H. VINCENT: "New Bond Street."] That was all the hon. Member knew about it. Let him go to his hatter and he would learn that the silk covering was made in France, and that it could not be made in this country. Notwithstanding that, the British hat was preferred to every other, and high prices were paid for it, because it was better put together, it was a better manufactured article on the whole than was made in any other country. How would the hon. Gentleman stamp the material of which every silk hat was made? We imported enormous quantities of rough tanned hides from the United States for the Northampton and Leicester shoe trade. We could not do without them, and we re-exported them in a made article. His hon. Friend wanted to have stamped "conspicuously and indelibly" upon every piece of leather put into a shoe, "Made abroad," while the uppers were made in Midland towns and re-exported to the value of millions sterling a year. And so it would be with every button, every fastening for every coat, and every woman's mantle; it would have to bear the mark "Made abroad." The whole thing would be simply ruinous to British trade and industry. ["Hear, hear!"] He could conceive nothing more suicidal than that a country which was the largest manufacturer and exporter of any in the world should decry as an unpatriotic thing the purchase of foreign-made goods. ["Oh, oh!"] It was perfect nonsense to come down to the House with a Bill of this kind supposing that it was a way of bringing about protection. Why had not the hon. Member the courage of his opinions and boldly say, "I wish to prohibit the importation of foreign manufactures by putting a heavy duty upon them?" [Sir H. VINCENT: "I will do so next Tuesday."] There was not a merchant in the kingdom who had ever seen the Bill, it had not been seen by the House, and yet the hon. Gentleman asked a Second Reading for it. If he refused the inquiry offered by the President of the Board of Trade, he hoped the House would, by an enormous majority, convince the hon. Gentleman not only that it was opposed to the principle of the Bill, but that it was a Measure at once unintelligible and impracticable.

On the return of MR. SPEAKER, after the usual interval—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said it was rare that he was able to agree with both Front Benches, as he was on the present occasion, but he was bound to say a few words in consequence of what had fallen from the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division. He said my hon. Friend did not know anything about certain trades, or about ladies. As regards ladies the right hon. Gentleman no doubt had the advantage and knew more about them, but he should have supposed that the right hon. Gentleman knew enough about trade to prevent him from falling into an egregious error. The right hon. Gentleman was mistaken in supposing that the Merchandise Marks Act had had the effect of decreasing the foreign consumption of English gloves.

*MR. MUNDELLA: I said the export trade.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that was exactly what he was dealing with, and moreover he was dealing with Board of Trade figures at the time when the right hon. Gentleman himself was there. In 1887, before the Act came into operation, there were exported 60,000 dozens of gloves, while in 1888 87,000, and last year 134,000 dozen of gloves were exported. When he had been in Vienna he bought there a pair of gloves which were very good, warm, and cheap, and for the moment he became converted to the opinion the right hon. Gentleman expressed that English glove-makers would have a great deal to fear from foreign competition, but a day later he looked at the inside of the gloves, and found they were marked "Dent's Own Make." [*Laughter.*] It was the fact that English glove exportation had not decreased in consequence of the Merchandise Marks Act, but had considerably increased. He did not think it would be wise to pass the Second Reading of this Bill, and he would advise his hon. Friend to withdraw it, as its effect would be mischievous. One of the principal supporters of this Bill, the right hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet, was discovered to be in possession of one of the very articles which he rose to denounce, for he produced from his pocket a foreign pencil, which, he should have thought, he would rather have perished than possess. [*Laughter.*] If these Bavarian pencils were to be found in the green tree of the right hon. Member for Thanet what might they not expect from the dry tree of the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division? [*Laughter.*] No doubt there was a very large importation of foreign-made goods. They were trumpery, but they were flashy and cheap and suited the market, and he for one was in favour of keeping that market. In the picture book which he had with him, he observed that the very first picture was a portrait of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and underneath was the mark "Made in Germany." [*Loud laughter.*] It was not alone these insulting remarks in books, or the wooden products of German art, which were imported in their thousands, but gloves and lamp-shades were imported. To such a state of things had we come indeed that no less a thing than a candidate for Parliament had recently been brought from Germany and presented in public without being legibly marked as being of foreign make. [*Laughter.*] Of course, these were abuses, but they were abuses which he thought we must endure. Did the hon. Member for West Islington suggest that the British manufacturer took his own goods and marked them "Made in Belgium or Germany?" That was not probable; but however that might be, there were tricks in all trades, and if they were going to legislate like this in order to prevent small frauds in teas, clarets, and Sheffield cutleries, they would be doing material mischief, and would have a heavy job before them this Session. An enormous number of ladies' boots and gloves were exported by us to France, and the great emporium in Paris where people went to buy their stuffs was called in English "Old England." [*Laughter.*] He might mention that in the casino of Buda Pesth the cigarettes of Turkish tobacco which were sold were bought in Bond Street. Moreover, at this moment almost every Royal palace in Europe was being refurnished by a distinguished Member of that House. [*Laughter.*] By far the most important industry in which this country was engaged was the carrying trade, which was indeed of more importance than our agriculture or manufactures. He pointed out that almost every pound of tea consumed in Syria came from London, and that the cigarettes made from so-called Egyptian tobacco reached Egypt from Liverpool. It was first sent to Liverpool, and then sent back to Egypt. Such things as these were due to our unquestioned supremacy in the carrying trade. His firm belief was that a mistake was made in that respect by the Merchandise Marks Act. That Act seriously interfered with the carrying trade of this country; and the figures that had been quoted conclusively showed that this was the case. When an English customer was informed that articles he had hitherto bought in England, and believed to be English, were made in foreign countries and only passed through England, he naturally desired to go direct to the foreign country and obtain them from there, and he himself had no doubt that the result of the Merchandise Marks Act had been to divert a large portion of the carrying trade from English ports to foreign ports. For these reasons he urged his hon. Friend to forego his attempt to get this Bill read a second time. The discussion, however, had been an advantage, because it had shown that the true principles of trade were not monopolised on the other side of the House, but were entertained equally on that (the Ministerial) side, and he thought it would have disposed, if not of the original Act, at any rate of any further attempt to aggravate it, and make it more mischievous. [" Hear, hear ! "]

MR. CHANNING rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

MR. JAMES KENYON (Lancashire, Bury) agreed that many good articles came from abroad. English manufacturers were not afraid of foreign competition provided they had fair play. If English-made articles were of equal quality and value with those made abroad he was sure the majority of English people in shops would prefer the former. Personally, as one who had had considerable experience in the commercial world, he should do so. He appreciated the importance of technical education in this country, but what wanted still more the serious attention of Parliament were the excessive charges of railway companies for the carriage of goods. Shipping had been mentioned, and he would like to point out that the shipping trade of Hamburg and Bremen had been considerably increased by the fostering and petting it had received from the German Government. Only within the last three or four months an additional subsidy had been given to the North German Lloyd Steamship Company to compete with our shipping. The marking of goods made abroad had distinct advantages to British manufacturers. When it came to a question of which to choose, the English and foreign-made goods being of equal value, the English customer ought to have the opportunity of giving preference to English manufactures. [" Hear, hear ! "]

COLONEL VICTOR MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon) said that from one point of view this Bill did not go far enough, and from another it was too ambiguous. There were many other questions which required consideration besides those which had been touched upon in the Debate. The real blot in the present Bill was that articles were brought here from abroad in bulk, but the bulk was broken and individual articles were sold without any mark upon them to say that they were of foreign origin. He alluded chiefly to small articles, such as cutlery, and notably scissors. They were imported into this country and passed through the Customs, and were marked as being made in Germany or France. But when they got into the shops—at the very point when they wished the public to know that they were foreign goods—there was no way of telling that this was the case, and the scissors were sold without any mark or indication as to where they came from. It was the same thing with pens. When they bought them, how could they tell where they were made? They were all aware that a quantity of hosiery was made in Germany and abroad and brought to England. Goods in bulk were marked with the place of origin, and when the articles were sold in retail it was impossible for anyone to tell where they came from. In these respects he believed the Act required amendment. That was a matter which could only be dealt with after serious consideration, and probably reference to a Select Committee. The Act was also extremely ambiguous, because it said there was no longer to be any definite indication of the country in which the article was produced. Was the foreign manufacturer not to put his own name on his goods? For instance, was Krupp, the gun maker, no longer to mark his gun so? He was simply to stamp on the gun " foreign made ? "

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT : We do not use Krupp guns.

AN IRISH MEMBER : What about the Chartered Company?

COL. MILWARD proceeded to say that what they wanted was to promote the interests of the private manufacturer everywhere. A large bulk of the trade of the country was foreign trade. [" Hear, hear ! "] In foreign countries reliable English manufacturers were well known and valued. [" Hear, hear ! "] The Merchandise Marks Act did not originate in this country. Long before it was passed in this country, France and America obliged us to mark all goods made in England, and what was good enough for those countries should be good enough for us. Where there was equal value, where there was equality of value and price, Englishmen would give preference to English-made articles. ["Hear, hear!"] The real reply to the whole of this question was to make better things in England than were made now, and, by means of technical education, to educate our workpeople so that we might regain the position of the first manufacturing people in the world. He still hoped his hon. Friend would see his way to withdraw the Motion he had made, because he was sure a Select Committee would be able to come to a better conclusion.

MR. GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood), referring to a statement by the hon. Member for Spen Valley that the ordinary English consumer purchased articles not because they were made in England or were made abroad, but because they were good and cheap, said it would obviously be an advantage, in cases where English and foreign made goods were equal in price and quality, that the purchaser should know which were English and which were foreign. Other things being equal the preference would naturally be given to English goods. He reminded hon. Members that they were not discussing the question of repealing the Merchandise Marks Act, but simply a Bill to modify that Act, and in the very direction advocated by hon. Gentlemen who opposed the original Measure. A great many of the arguments that had been adduced against the Bill were really applicable to the Merchandise Marks Act, and not to the proposed Amendment. On that ground he gave the Bill his support.

MR. LUCAS-SHADWELL (Hastings) said he had observed that hon. Members opposing this Bill had called it a very small Measure and a very bad one. Very often what were called small Measures were of more benefit to the country than some larger Measures. He had been particularly struck with the fact alluded to by the hon. Member who had just sat down that the larger number of the arguments or attacks made on this Bill were not attacks on the Measure itself, but on the present state of the law; and, as this Bill did not seek to repeal that law, these attacks seemed to him to be rather beside the mark. At any rate, surely it must be admitted, on the line of argument taken by those who opposed the Measure, that the present state of the law advertised certain foreign countries; surely it must be admitted that the proposal before the House was an improvement in that respect. After all, the great object of the Bill was really to change the law in that regard by directing that goods should be marked "foreign made." The Merchandise Marks Act, he submitted, was a good Act, in spite of all that had been said against it. He believed it had worked for the good of the trade of this country; but it had been found to be inadequate, and therefore for that reason his hon. Friend had introduced this Bill to amend it. It was, however, a very large subject, and he was disposed to think that the advice given by the President of the Board of Trade, that it would be well that a Committee should make an inquiry into the matter, had a great deal of force in it. At the same time, if the Member for Sheffield desired to press the matter to a division, he should certainly support him on the present occasion. It was his contention that this Bill was in the interests of both manufacturer and purchaser, and surely it was only fair and reasonable that a man should know, when he bought an article, whether it was British made or not. An argument had been used that purchasers did not care whether the article was British made or not. Some did and some did not, but it seemed to him that what they had to consider was whether it was fair that the purchaser should know what he was buying. It was, at any rate, for the benefit of the workman, because, as foreign goods replaced British goods in the market, his employment was interfered with; and, although he had had but a small experience in that House, he had been engaged in electioneering for 15 years, and ought to know something about the feeling of the working classes in this matter. He believed that the Merchandise Marks Act had improved the condition of the working classes, and that this Bill of his hon. Friend would receive their support. ["Hear, hear!"] They were, of course, met with the oft-repeated cry of Protection. No doubt it was protection in a practical sense, but it was not protection in the sense understood by political economists. As he had said, this was no new departure, but merely a Bill to amend the existing law, and though it was, perhaps, desirable that a Committee should inquire into the question, he believed some strengthening of the present law was required, and that some alteration would tend to the industrial welfare of this country.

Mr. ARTHUR JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said he would like to say a few words on this Bill, in connection with another Bill, namely, the Bill for marking foreign meat. He hoped it would not be understood that there was no hope of carrying out that Bill. It had been said in the course of the Debate that it was impossible to mark foreign meat. It was, on the contrary, a very easy thing. All the foreign meat going into Belgium was marked with its place of origin, and if it could be done there it could be done in London. The only desire the promoters of these Bills had was to prevent fraud. They did not say that because an article happened to be marked "foreign made," it was a bad article. What they wanted was to prevent foreign articles being sold as English. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield said that the consequence of marking would be that colonists would go to the place of origin direct. All he could say was that if this country was to take up the position of middleman it was a very great misfortune, and the sooner we got out of that position the better. Surely there were manufacturers in this country who could manufacture goods equally as well as foreigners. He thought the attempt of his hon. Friend was a good one. It was very desirable that anything that could be done to prevent fraud should be done. If a Committee were appointed to inquire into the whole subject, he dared say it would be wise to leave the matter to that Committee. But something ought to be done, because it was notorious that the bread was now being taken out of the mouths of the workpeople of this country. To the general scheme and idea of the Bill he gave a hearty support, but whether it would be wise to press it at the present moment he must leave to his hon. Friend.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Stockport) said that he certainly could not agree with the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. It was his misfortune to be frequently opposed to the hon. Gentleman, but he could not help it. He supposed that it was because "it was their nature to." The hon. Gentleman, in dealing with this question, had discussed a Bill that was not then before the House—whether it was even in print he did not know. All that he could say was that there was no analogy between the Bill to which the hon. Member had referred and that which was then under discussion. The Bill which was brought into the House last Session for the marking of meat required that every piece of meat cut from a carcass which was imported from abroad should be marked as being of foreign origin, even if the carcass was cut up into hundreds of pieces. He regretted that he had not been able to hear the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in reference to this Bill. [An hon. Member: "He jumped upon it."] In that case he was sure the right hon. Gentleman must have pulverised it. After that very little remained to be said or done in the matter. It appeared to him that any alteration in the Merchandise Marks Act would do no good. No doubt that Measure, up to the present time, had operated very well, but he confessed that he had some apprehensions with regard to this doctrine of marking. It was quite enough for him to look at the names on the back of this Bill in order to make him suspicious of its real object. They all knew that the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield was the apostle of fair trade and of all other kinds of trade. [*Laughter.*] He did not know whether the hon. and gallant Member was engaged in commerce, but with regard to the question of marking he was afraid that, if the hon. and gallant Gentleman had his way, they would be marked out of house and home. Last Session a Measure for marking foreign fruit had been ridiculed out of the House. He anticipated that the hon. and gallant Gentleman would some day or other introduce a Measure for the protection of the British onion, and would have nothing to do with the Spanish onion. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] They were asked to mark almost every article of food, into whatever small portions it might be cut, in order to benefit the working classes of the country. He did not believe that the policy would succeed in attaining its object. He believed that British trade would be able to hold its own. He did not regard healthy competition as being undesirable in the interests of trade, because we learned much from foreign competition, and from the manner in which goods were made abroad. If we established technical schools in this country, and managed our business as our foreign competitors managed theirs, we should be able to more than hold our own.

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough) said that it had been remarked that there was a very strong feeling prevalent among the working classes that the bread was being taken out of their mouths through foreign competition. He did not know whether that was the case or not, but if it were, the sooner the minds of the working classes were disabused of that idea the better. It had been remarked that if foreign-made goods were marked no one would look at them. But even the right hon. Member for Thanet, who was a protectionist of protectionists, had admitted that the pencil with which he was taking his notes was marked "Made in Bavaria." They themselves, the representatives of the British people, used many articles that were of foreign origin. He therefore did not believe that the British people were burning with the desire to purchase home-made goods only. The British farmer, who was continually crying out at the injustice of our importing foreign cattle, fed his own beasts upon foreign-made cake. What the British people desired was to purchase, not British goods, but good articles at the cheapest possible price. He wished to point out to the working classes that they must not be misled into believing that the marking of foreign-made goods would improve the trade of this country. We were beaten by the foreigners, because we were handicapped in the race, in consequence of the heavy rents which our manufacturers had to pay for the use of the land on which their manufactories stood. Then again, there was the amount of royalties which manufacturers had to pay for getting ores out of the land. They were told that Belgium could send manufactured iron into this country and sell it cheaper than our own manufacturers could do. That was because our manufacturers had to pay royalties amounting to 6s. 5d. per ton upon their iron. As a nation we ought to be ashamed of ourselves for crying out against foreign competition. We had the best land in the world, the best ironstone in the world, the best coal in the world, the best blood and bone and sinew in the world, and yet we could not compete successfully with other nations who had not our advantages. Why should we allow these enormous royalties to be exacted for the raising of the ore which had been placed in the bowels of the earth by the Almighty for the benefit of the community at large, and not of particular individuals. Let our manufacturers do as the German manufacturers did, and bring up their sons to be better manufacturers than themselves, instead of bringing them up to be gentlemen who did nothing but hunt and shoot.

*SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) regretted that he had been unavoidably prevented from attending to the Debate as he ought to have done. The hon. Member who had just sat down had not been content with denouncing the Bill, but he must go further, and declare himself in favour of the fraudulent importation of foreign-made goods. He was not sure that the hon. Gentleman would not receive a rather serious warning on the subject from his constituents, who were largely composed of working men. This Measure was intended to protect our home produce from the fraud of the foreigner. [*Ironical cheers.*] He had never given his vote in favour of a protectionist Measure, neither was he a protectionist nor a fair trader. The whole essence of the question was the fraudulent marking of foreign goods. He understood his right hon. Friend the Member for Thanet had spoken of the Bill as one forwarding another policy which he had always supported.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I said it was accepted by a good many as being a substitute which would go down with their constituents instead of the real remedy. [*A laugh.*]

*SIR W. HART DYKE thought his right hon. Friend's explanation was almost worthy of the columns of *Punch.* As he understood the Bill, it was not proposed to introduce a new system of marking, but simply to alter the wording of the marking. To the Bill, therefore, could there be any real or solid objection? Was there anything in the proposed change which could be fairly described as protective? All that was proposed was that the words "foreign made" should be substituted for the words which were now compulsorily placed on certain articles. Surely that was a proposal worthy of careful consideration. He was quite aware that in dealing with the retail sale of agricultural produce, and especially fruit, a great difficulty immediately arose. It would be ridiculous to suggest that every pottle of strawberries should be marked "home grown," but there was an amount of fraud going on to the detriment of the great fruit industry in this country that hon. Members would hardly believe possible. Take the case of early fruit grown abroad. Thousands and thousands of English baskets were sent over to Antwerp and other ports. Foreign fruit was packed into the baskets, sent over to our English markets, and sold as English fruit. He did not plead for protection, but he thought care might be taken, by legislation or otherwise, to secure that a huge mass of fruit was not brought over in bulk, flooding our markets, and sold as English. The foreign early fruit certainly depreciated our markets for the whole year. English fruit came upon a depreciated market, and the market never recovered. The English paper trade, too, had been half ruined in consequence of the system of marking foreign paper. The marks showing the foreign make only appeared on the outside cover, with the result that tons and tons of German paper were being sold in this country as English-made paper. He did not say these were reasons why the House should lightly pass legislation like this, but he asserted that the cases of fruit and paper which he had mentioned showed that arguments could be advanced in favour of the object of his hon. Friend's Measure. But he rose particularly to refute the statements of the hon. Member opposite, who was never content unless he was denouncing landowners. He wished the hon. Member had gone through his experience as a landowner during the last five years. Had he done so he would know that the sneers he was always levelling against one of the most struggling classes of the community were not only irritating, but most undeserved.

Mr. LOGAN denied that he had ever sneered at landowners. ["Oh, oh!"] He had always spoken against the system but not against individuals, and he should continue to do so in spite of whatever might be said.

*Sir HOWARD VINCENT said he did not wish the Debate to be unduly prolonged, and therefore, if the two essential principles contained in the Bill were included in the reference to the proposed Select Committee, he would ask the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion for the Second Reading.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley) said the reference to the Committee would be so general in terms that it would admit of the consideration of any proposals for the amendment of the present law, and consequently would admit of any proposals which were contained in the Bill. Under those circumstances he hoped his hon. Friend would withdraw the Bill. That, coupled with the fact that the Bill had never been seen by any merchant or manufacturer in the country, whom it affected so largely, would, he hoped, induce the hon. Member to withdraw the Measure. The discussion had been a very interesting one, and, he might add, a very needful one. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield spoke of the original intention of the Merchandise Marks Act. The intention of that Act was not to protect any manufacturer from competition generally, but from fraudulent competition. Happily there was a large number of manufacturers in England, a larger number than in any other country, whose names were a guarantee to every buyer throughout the world of the quality and honesty of the work which they offered. The object of the Merchandise Marks Act was to prevent such frauds as the labelling of foreign-made knives with the name of "Joseph Rodgers, Sheffield," and of foreign-made needles with the name of "Milward, Redditch." When, however, the Act was altered in the direction of indicating the place of origin, it bore hardly on the English manufacturer, and had resulted in a decrease of our trade abroad. The hon. Member for Sheffield had produced a lamp-glass made in Saxony; but if he had made inquiries as to the lamp trade in Birmingham, he would have found that there were thousands of men employed in it, that not only the lamp-glass, but the chimney, the reservoir, the foot, and the burner were all made in different parts of the world, and that the Birmingham manufacturer, through our system of free trade, could lay the whole world under contribution—[*cheers*]—and, by putting the different parts together, could produce an article that nobody else could touch. If they insisted that the burners, the framework, and the foot of the lamp were all to be marked, they would simply publish the information of the manufacture of the lamp everywhere. The right hon. Member for the Thanet Division had referred to the effect of this kind of legislation in the interests of British goods. Why, there were far more British goods sold abroad than foreign goods sold at home. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend behind him had spoken of English goods being unfairly driven out of the markets under present conditions. What about the £30,000,000 worth of goods we exported to Germany; the £26,000,000 worth we exported to France; the £30,000,000 worth exported to the Continent of America; and the vast quantity sent elsewhere? ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: What are the imports?

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS said that did not immediately affect the point to which he was referring. What the framers of the Merchandise Marks Act had in view, and what the Government had in view, at the present time was to prevent fraud. ["Hear, hear!"] That was the main object to attain, and it undoubtedly was necessary in common fairness to the British manufacturer. ["Hear, hear!"] Beyond this, however, he thought the only view to be taken in those matters was to leave trade alone as much as possible. [*Opposition cheers.*] An hon. Member had spoken of the popularity of British goods. Well, what had secured them that popularity were their quality and the enterprise and skill devoted to their production—the fact that the British manufacturer had been kept at his wits' end to compete with the foreigner in every market. [*Cheers.*] Under similar conditions he was confident that British goods would always maintain their popularity. ["Hear, hear!"] In fact, more than ever the British manufacturer would have to feel that, in combating foreign competition, from whatever quarter, he must rely on himself—on his own well-tried skill, energy and enterprise, for if he failed in that direction he would fail altogether. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. Friend had referred to cases of fraud which he said there were no means at present of reaching, cases in which articles of food—mutton, for instance—were openly sold as British but which were of foreign production. Of course that was actual fraud, and ought to be prevented. The purchaser, or consumer, ought to have the means of knowing what he was purchasing. ["Hear, hear!"] But they must be careful in amending the existing laws, or in passing fresh laws of the kind, that they did not further interfere with the position we held as described by the Leader of the Opposition, when he said that Great Britain was the emporium of the world—[*cheers*]—and that every piece of legislation which had a tendency to keep goods from coming to this great central market to be re-distributed over the world, not only took away trade from the British merchant, but reduced the work in the many forms of collateral employment. ["Hear, hear!"] In those circumstances, and after the valuable and interesting Debate his hon. Friend had raised—[*Opposition laughter*]—he hoped that his hon. Friend would not press the matter to a Division, but would withdraw the Motion. [*Loud Opposition cries of* "No."]

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Am I to understand that the condition I laid down is accepted by the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that the principle referred to in this Bill will be included in the reference to the Select Committee? [*Opposition cries of* "No."]

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS: What I said was that the terms of reference to the Committee will be so general that they will include any proposition that might be made for the alteration of the present law. ["Hear, hear!" *and Opposition cheers.*]

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Well, Sir, as the right hon. Gentleman has undertaken, on behalf of the President of the Board of Trade—[*Opposition cries of* "No"]—that the matters to which I have called attention shall be considered —[*Opposition cries of* "No"]—I ask the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion. [*Loud Opposition cries of* "No."]

*MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Motion be withdrawn? [*Loud Opposition cries of* "No."]

The House divided:—Ayes, 97; Noes, 153.—(Division List,—No.7—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Brassey, Albert
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs)
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Charrington, Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Darling, Charles John
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred.Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon.SirWilliamHart
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Galloway, William Johnson
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Greville, Captain
Hanbury, Rt.Hon. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Hill,Rt.Hn.Lord Arthur(Down)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Kemp,George
Kenny, William
Kenyon, James
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewelyn,Sir Dillwyn(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R.(Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col. CharlesW. (Evesham)
Long,Rt. Hn.Walter(Liverpool)
Lowther, Rt.Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
McCalmont,Maj-Gen. (Ant'mN)
M'Hugh, Patrick, A. (Leitrim)
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
More, Robert Jasper
Murray,Rt.Hn.A.Graham(Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Ewd. James.
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seton-Karr, Henry
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Thorburn, Walter
Tully, Jasper
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warkworth, Lord
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, Jos. H.(Middlesbrough)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir HOWARD VINCENT AND Mr. GODSON.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen,Wm.(Newc. under Lyme)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Anstruther, H. T.
Arrol, Sir William
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Barlow, John Emmott
Beach,Rt.Hon.SirM.H.(Bristol)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Biddulph, Michael
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T.Gibson (King'sLynn)
Brown, Alexander H.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn.
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collery, Bernard
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Dane, Richard M.
Davies, M.Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees-(Pembrokesh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Ellis,Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. Glamorgan)
Evans,Sir FrancisH.(South'ton)
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Ffrench, Peter
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fowler,Rt. Hon.Sir H. (Wol'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Fry, Lewis
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibney, James
Gold, Charles
Gull, Sir Cameron
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick,Thomas Charles H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hoare,Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Johnston, William (Belfast)

Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
Maclean, James Mackenzie
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles, (Breconshire)
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Purvis, Robert
Reckitt, Harold James
Richardson, Thomas
Rickett, J. Compton.
Roberts, John Bryan (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sheehy, David
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuite, James
Usborne, Thomas
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsf'ld)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. John Wilson (Durham) and Mr. John Burns.

SUNDAY CLOSING (WALES) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. J. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) rose to move the Second Reading of the Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill.

MR. W. J. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.), interposing, asked Mr. Speaker's ruling upon a point of order in regard to the Bill, which he said was only delivered to Members at ten minutes to 1 o'clock that day. The precedent on which he based his request occurred on March 9th, 1892, when the Places of Worship Enfranchisement Bill was before the House. The hon. Member for the Oxford University then asked Mr. Speaker Peel's ruling upon this point, and Mr. Speaker Peel, in reply, said:—

> "What has passed shows the inconvenience of discussing a Bill only very recently in the hands of hon. Members. I cannot interfere, however, on a point of Order to stop the Debate, though of course it is an argument against a Second Reading Debate, if hon. Members have an imperfect knowledge of the provisions of a Bill."

And, further on, Mr. Speaker Peel said:—

> "I make no complaint whatever against the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire for pressing the Second Reading. What I said did not amount to so much as a suggestion to the hon. Member. In ordinary circumstances I should not consent to put the Motion for the adjournment of the Debate, but I shall do so now as I think it is essentially a matter for the House to decide whether the comparatively short time that has elapsed since the Bill has been placed in the hands of hon. Members, and the alterations that have been made in the Measure since last Session would militate against the fair discussion of the Bill, and that it is proper that the discussion on the Second Reading should not now take place."

In view of that ruling he (Mr. Galloway) wished to ask whether he was in order in moving that the Debate on this Bill be now adjourned.

*MR. SPEAKER: It will be observed that Mr. Speaker Peel said there it was not a question of order. Moreover, he was speaking after the Second Reading of the Bill had been moved, and a Motion for the Adjournment had been made. It was only a question as to whether or not he ought to consider that Motion as an abuse of the Rules of the House. The time for raising such a point has not yet come.

MR. J. HERBERT ROBERTS then moved the Second Reading of the Bill. The Bill had, he said, for six successive Sessions been introduced into that House in identically the same terms, but this was the first opportunity they had had of bringing it under the notice of the House. The House would remember that in 1881 the Welsh Sunday Closing Bill was introduced and passed through all its stages and it became law the next year. Behind that Act there was a very strong body of opinion in Wales. After seven years, at the instigation of a certain party, and for reasons which he would not go into at the present moment an agitation was got up in order to prevail on the Government to send a Commission to inquire into the operation of the Act. That was in 1889. That Commission was appointed by the Conservative Ministry of the day, and out of the five Commissioners four held the political views of the Government, and one, Sir John Hibbert, held opposite views. He mentioned that because the present Bill was virtually and substantially the recommendations of the Commission. He did not think the Government could possibly take up a very hostile attitude towards this Bill for the reason he had just given. It might be said that there was now sitting a Commission to inquire into the general licensing law, and that was a reason why legislation on this point should be postponed. He would reply to that argument that the Report of this General Commission ought not to be allowed to override the Report of the Special Commission which was specially sent down to Wales to inquire into this particular matter. This Bill did not propose any new legislation whatever. It only proposed to make what they regarded as necessary amendments of the existing law. In their Report the Commissioners pointed out that the result of their inquiry in Wales had been to leave no doubt on their minds that throughout Wales as a whole the general opinion and feeling preponderated largely in favour of the policy of the Act. Evidence was given to show that, in the first place, there had been an increased improvement in the order in the streets on Sunday in the Principality; secondly, that there had been increased regularity at work during the early days of the week; and, thirdly, that it had done something to conduce to the greater comfort and had improved the conditions of the people generally. It might be said that in certain districts it had been followed by an increase of the number of Sunday convictions. But the Commission remarked—

> "We cannot regard these statistics as conclusive one way or the other. We are driven to conclude that the increase in Sunday convictions arises from some cause peculiar to the state of things prevailing on that day."

He presented some of the main difficulties that had rendered necessary the incorporation of these recommendations into the Bill before the House. First, he referred to the ever-present difficulty, not only in Wales but wherever Sunday closing was carried out, the difficulty of the *bonâ fide* traveller. The Commissioners on this point made a very important statement. They said—

> "Undoubtedly it is the case that in the existing state of the law, interpreted as the *bonâ fide* traveller clause usually is, anything like a general prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday has not yet been enforced."

In other words, with the law as it is at present, it is impossible that any Sunday-closing Act in any part of the country can be really effective. This was a very important statement, and proved to his mind conclusively that the failure—if failure there had been—in the operation of the Act in certain districts was due, not to mistaken policy, but to defective law. This difficulty had been got over in Scotland by a system of Sunday licences, which the Commissioners recommended should be carried out in Wales, and the recommendation had been included in the Bill. He believed a similar difficulty had been met with in Ireland. The Act had been evaded in four main points. First, there was the operation of the *bonâ fide* traveller clause; secondly, in relation to clubs which were not genuinely clubs; thirdly, in reference to shebeens—and this was frequent in the populous centres of South Wales; and fourthly, in reference to the wholesale beer trade. Taking these four points, he should show how they were proposed to be dealt with in the Bill. First, in reference to the *bonâ fide* traveller clause, it was proposed—and this on the special recommendation of the Royal Commission—that no occupier of licensed premises should sell to travellers on Sunday without a Sunday licence. Further, it was proposed that the licensing authority shall have power to grant these licences, but the premises used for the purpose shall be above the rateable value of £25. Also, in accordance with the suggestion of the Royal Commission, these licensed holders would be required to keep a book and enter therein the names of travellers served. The point in reference to illegal clubs was met by a clause imposing fines where it was proved that such clubs were constituted for drinking purposes. A higher scale of fines was provided for breaches of the law in reference to shebeens. Lastly, in reference to the wholesale beer trade—which had been the cause of considerable difficulty to the police in Cardiff and elsewhere, owing to the unsatisfactory character of those who held the assize licences and the unsatisfactory character of the buildings in which the beer was sold—it was proposed to meet the evil, first, by registration by the County Councils and by fixing a minimum rateable value of £15. The last provision of the Bill he referred to was one which prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sundays in refreshment rooms at railway stations. This was not in accordance with his own view and opinion, but it was a specific recommendation of the Royal Commission. He admitted at once that there were formidable difficulties in the position, but he asserted that these difficulties had been caused entirely by defects in the Act, not by the policy of the Act. He did not disguise for a moment that there had been a feeling, especially in Cardiff, that the Act should be relaxed in different districts, or, perhaps, in certain portions of the Principality, repealed altogether; but the real factor in the case was this, that the Commission had, in unmistakable terms, expressed the opinion that the Act should not be repealed, but continued and strengthened, and it was beside the question for anyone to make a suggestion in that direction. He quoted a reference in the Report, in which the Commission dealt with a suggestion that in certain districts public-houses should be open during limited hours—

> "We are, however, so convinced that a change in this direction would be so unwelcome to so vast a majority of the population in so large an area of the Principality that we do not think it ought to be carried out."

This was a plain statement of the utmost value. It meant that, in the judgment of the Royal Commission, the moral sentiment of the country should not be sacrificed to—he did not use the word with any offensive meaning—the liquor interest of Cardiff or any portion of South Wales. Before concluding, a remark was necessary in reference to the border difficulty—undoubtedly one of the most grave obstacles in certain districts to the strict operation of the Act of 1881. As many Members would know, the border-line between England and Wales was exceptionally unfortunate, because it passed through a populous mining district in parts of Glamorganshire and Monmouth. He would not go into details, but this had been the cause of a very large proportion of the evasion of the Act, and consequent agitation against the Act in these districts. The Commissioners, on their part, were not able to say anything as to the advisability of including Monmouth in the scope of the Act, because they would have been out of order in doing so—that being outside their terms of reference. But feeling in Monmouth was unmistakably in favour of inclusion, and therefore in the Bill it was proposed that the county of Monmouth should be part of Wales, so far as the Sunday-closing Act was concerned. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, had had the opportunity of testing the feeling of the majority of his constituents on the subject. In conclusion, and summarising the points he had made, he asked the House to believe that this was in no sense or degree a partisan or political Bill; it was the embodiment of the deliberate and unanimous opinion and judgment of the Royal Commission, founded on evidence taken in the Principality itself. This Commission was appointed by a Conservative Government and at the instigation of a Party hostile to the policy of Sunday-closing in general, and to Sunday-closing in Wales in particular. It was no new piece of legislation proposed; there was no question of principle involved; it was simply amendment of an existing Act. The feeling in Wales was undoubtedly getting stronger in favour of Sunday-closing, and the votes of the Parliamentary representatives of Wales would prove this. If there were in England the same body of public opinion in favour of this legislation, no doubt it would soon be carried. He appealed to the Government, and hoped they would see the injustice of refusing to support what was, after all, the recommendation of their own Commission. He did not claim support of Members on party grounds, and not on extreme temperance grounds; he claimed the support of the House generally to the changes contained in the Bill, because they had received the seal of the Commission he had referred to after careful and impartial inquiry, and because he believed if these amendments were carried into law they would conduce to the moral welfare of the people of Wales. [*Cheers.*] He moved that the Bill be now read a Second time.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT rose to occupy only a minute or two, thinking that by so doing he would best serve the cause of the Bill. The Bill was founded almost literally on the Report of the Commission of 1889, and, as his hon. Friend had said, this Commission was appointed by a Conservative Government, and it was a Commission whose opinion carried the greatest possible weight. He did not know if his hon. Friend had given the names of the Commissioners, but he would mention them. The Chairman was Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and the other Commissioners were Lord Emlyn, a Tory landlord much respected in Wales; Judge Horatio Lloyd, Judge Harrison and Sir John Hibbert. It was impossible to mention a list of names more qualified to pronounce on this question. There was a most careful consideration of evidence taken on the spot, and the Bill, he was justified in saying, was practically a transcript of the Report of the Commission. This was quite enough to recommend the Second Reading to the House. He would press upon the House that in a matter of this kind they should give the Bill a Second Reading, reserving any criticism on particular clauses till they reached the Committee stage.

*Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff) observed that, personally, he could not accept the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the Bill should be allowed to be read a second time without a division. Whilst recognising the moderate way in which the hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill had recommended it to the House, he thought his statement contained some very questionable propositions. He said, in the first place, that no new legislation was intended by the Bill. But this was as strong a Bill as he had ever read for the manufacture of new crimes and criminals. The hon. Member in his statement said that the Commissioners made very important exceptions as regarded the operation of the Welsh Sunday-closing Act in a borough like Cardiff, and he then went on to say that the Commissioners recommended that the moral sentiment of the country generally should prevail in the town of Cardiff.

Mr. J. HERBERT ROBERTS said that was his own expression, and not the recommendation of the Committee.

*Mr. MACLEAN remarked that the Commissioners did not go so far as that, and he was glad to find that this was only an expression of the hon Member's own opinion. What were they to think of the sacred principle of Local Veto when, in a town of nearly 200,000 inhabitants, they were to have the opinion probably of the majority of that town overridden by the moral sentiment of the people in the country districts. Was not that a wonderful application of the principle of local option? The hon. Member said that a certain body of people in Cardiff were opposed to Sunday closing as it now existed. Yes, there was a very considerable body indeed. Only three years ago a plebiscite was taken, under circumstances which prevented the possibility of any wrong opinion being formed, and the issue was that a clear majority of those who voted were in favour of the abolition of the Welsh Sunday-closing Act. He might mention that the figures of the majority on that occasion very nearly reached 8,500, or almost exactly the figures by which he was returned as Member for Cardiff two years ago. He thought there could be very little doubt, considering the strong views he himself took on this question, that the prevailing opinion in the borough of Cardiff was against the Sunday-closing Act as it now existed, and it would be still more strongly opposed to the much more stringent provisions which the hon. Member proposed to introduce by this amending Bill. The hon. Member said that the Welsh Sunday-closing Act had only failed so far because it had not been carried out. Could the hon. Member point out to him any place in the world where prohibition had succeeded? Was there any place in America where it had not been successfully evaded? Such an iniquitous and demoralising law as the Welsh Sunday-closing Act, applied to a great town like

Cardiff, could not remain on the Statute Book in face of the resolute opposition of the people were it not for the fact that a law of that kind could always be successfully evaded. When he saw such oppressive legislation put in force, he could understand why in the old days, when oppressive Customs duties were imposed upon the entrance of foreign goods into this country, the whole sentiment of the people became strongly in favour of smuggling. The same thing took place under an Act of this kind, and every possible means were used for the purpose of evading its operation. However many amending Acts they passed, and however stringent they made their provisions, he said that the sentiment of freedom—the right of a man to drink a glass of beer when he wanted it, or a glass of spirits—was so strongly implanted in the breasts of the people of this country that they would never be able to enforce a prohibitive law of this kind. This measure which the hon. Gentleman had introduced, and which he said the Radicals of Wales were going to vote for, how different it was from any Sunday-closing Bill ever proposed for England! Had anyone in his senses ever proposed that there should be a universal Sunday-closing Bill for the whole of England, applicable to London and other large towns? Why, everybody knew that if it were proposed there would be a revolution in London to-morrow. Let them try it, and they would soon find out that that was the case. Why, then, should this experiment be tried in Wales? Were all their sentimental experiments to be tried there, and great towns like Cardiff to be treated as nobody dared to treat London and other big cities? He should like to call attention to some of the provisions of the Bill. He had only had an opportunity of reading it since he came into the House about an hour ago, but some of the provisions were familiar to him. Just let them see what was to become of that unfortunate gentleman—the *bonâ fide* traveller. In future he was not to get any kind of refreshment at all unless he had travelled a distance of not less than twelve miles for some purpose other than that of obtaining intoxicating liquors. He must travel the twelve miles first, and then he must set out afresh, when he was hungry, thirsty and tired, in order to obtain refreshment, and the burden, even then, was upon him of proving that he was a *bonâ fide* traveller. The clause went on—

> "No person shall be proved to be a traveller unless the evidence given in that behalf is corroborated in some material respect by a person or persons not charged or interested."

So that the poor man was to go about, after travelling twelve miles or more to find some person to prove that he was a *bonâ fide* traveller. That was the kind of legislation run mad which some hon. Gentlemen proposed to carry through Parliament. But those were not all the provisions that struck him as exceedingly grotesque and likely to produce very bad consequences. He would take Clause 10, which referred to illegal association. That clause said—

> "From and after the commencement of this Act any association of ten or more persons existing only for the purpose of supplying intoxicating liquor to its members, or if for any other purpose only ostensibly or colourably for such other purpose, shall be deemed an illegal association, and each and every member of such association shall be liable upon summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £5, or to imprisonment for any period not exceeding three months."

One of the means by which this Sunday-closing Act had been successfully evaded in populous towns in Wales was by the formation of an immense number of clubs of one kind or another, some numbering several thousand persons; and there was no doubt that the popularity of these clubs depended to a very considerable extent upon the fact that anybody belonging to them could go into his club and get refreshments on Sunday just as a Member of that House went into his club for the same purpose. ["Hear, hear!"] Under this clause every such club would be liable, on the information of spies or detectives—whom it seemed to be the purpose of hon. Members opposite to use in order to report on the conduct of every human being in this country, and to take care that he came up to their standard of what they deemed to be morality—every such club would be liable to be reported upon, and possibly to be shut up, under this clause. Then he passed on to shebeens. Here they had a specimen of the new drastic punishment which was to be introduced under the Bill—

> "Every person who keeps a shebeen shall be liable for the first offence to a penalty of

not less than £10, or imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not less than two months."

Hard labour played a very great part in the Bill. If the offender was convicted a second time he would be liable to a penalty of not less than £20, or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not less than four months, and to be prohibited from holding a licence for a term not exceeding five years. Were ever such monstrous proposals brought forward in any Bill introduced in such a modest and reasonable way as this was by its author? It was not only the people who kept shebeens who were to be punished in this way, but actually when they came to the final part of this clause they found it worded in this way—

"Any person found drunk, or having had drink supplied to him on premises where intoxicating liquor is had or kept for sale by retail without a licence, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds, or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding one month."

Really, was it possible that in that House of Commons any large body of men would be found ready to vote for sentencing to hard labour any man who drank an illicit glass of beer? He put the proposition to the House, and it seemed to him to surpass in absurdity any proposition brought before them. He need not go any further into the Bill. It proceeded on the same lines right through. The final clause was one regarding railway stations. It said—

"Section 4 of the Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, is hereby repealed, and from and after the commencement of this Act, no intoxicating liquor shall be sold on Sunday at a railway station to persons arriving at or departing from such station, by railroad or otherwise."

The hon. Member told the House that that was a clause proposed by the Commissioners, and they had heard a good deal about the high respect, ability, and impartiality of those Commissioners. [*Opposition cheers.*] It seemed to him that those Commissioners could hardly realise that many thousands of people arrived and departed on Sunday in places like Cardiff at the railway stations. Were these people to be prevented from having any kind of refreshment? In Cardiff a great number of people were opposed to the Sunday-closing Act, and often moderate men had gone so far as to say that they were in favour of opening public-houses on Sundays for a limited time in the middle of the day. Surely that was a reasonable rule to apply to all public-houses, without distinction, in great towns. Still more should it apply to railway stations, where it was sometimes necessary, for the preservation of health, that refreshment should be obtained. Was it right or reasonable that travellers arriving at or departing from a railway station should be deprived of the opportunity of obtaining any refreshment whatever? His constituents were very largely interested in this subject, and he should resolutely oppose the application of a Bill of this kind to the whole of Wales. He regretted that any such Bill should have been brought in, and if it were pressed to a division he should certainly vote against it.

*Mr. W. T. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs) protested against the proposal that they should pass a Bill of this kind blindfold. No doubt this Bill was absolutely similar to Bills that had been printed in former Sessions; but his experience of the House of Commons taught him that unless the subject-matter of a Measure was likely to be debated, Members did not read the Bill when it was circulated. There was also the reasonable probability that a Bill distributed in a former Session had been mislaid. It was only at 12.30 or 12.45 p.m. that day that the House had the opportunity of seeing in black and white what were the exact provisions which it was now proposed to add to the Statute Book. Members could not be expected to form a judgment and to come to a conclusion upon a matter of this kind without having taken the advice of people who were specially qualified by their position to give advice upon it. He was not himself a brewer or licensed victualler, but he knew certain people upon whose advice he could rely, and before forming a definite opinion on such a Bill as this he would like to hear what they had to say. A Royal Commission was at present inquiring into the whole subject of the Licensing Laws for England and Wales, and it seemed to him that they would be rather forestalling the conclusions at which the Commissioners might arrive by legislating before those Commissioners had reported upon the evidence laid before them. He admitted that Sunday closing had done good in certain districts in Wales, but in others it had done immense harm. Believing that, he was of opinion that they ought to be very careful about what they did, either to extend the existing law or to amend it. In little villages the closing of public-houses on Sundays meant that liquor was not sold on those days; but to imagine that in Cardiff and other great towns the Sunday Closing Act had stopped the sale of liquor would be perfectly absurd. One could not go into the streets without becoming convinced of that. It was a very serious thing to put upon the Statute Book a law which could be easily evaded. Legislation ought to be effective. In Wales the existing Act had been evaded in several ways, and chiefly by the establishment of bogus clubs. In places of the size of Cardiff and Swansea it was absolutely impossible to put down these bogus clubs. The present condition of things was unjust to the licenceholder, who had to manage his premises according to the regulations of the police, and to construct these premises in conformity with the demands of the Licensing Justices, and who had heavy duties to pay for his licence and other things. The proprietor or manager of a bogus club, on the other hand, had not the same heavy outlay and expense, and yet was able to make a profit on Sundays which the licenceholder was prevented from making. He was afraid that the Sunday-closing Act in its results had not altogether fulfilled the prognostications of its friends. The figures in the Government Returns for 1892 were very interesting. Sunday-closing was in force in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, but not in England. The Returns for 1892 showed that in Ireland the arrests for drunkenness on Sunday were 111 out of every 100,000 of the population; in Scotland the arrests were 100, and in Wales they were 68; but in England, where the public-houses were only closed for certain hours of the day, the number of arrests per 100,000 of the population was only 54. Some very urgent explanation of these figures was wanted from those gentlemen who wished to extend Temperance Legislation as affecting Sunday closing. The promoters of this Bill proposed to put down shebeens by increasing the punishment to which shebeen proprietors were liable. In his opinion the only effect of that provision would be that the shebeen proprietor would charge more for the beer which he sold. If there was a demand for liquor it would be supplied, and the greater the danger of supplying it the higher would be the price charged. He thought it would be well for the House to hear what had been said on this subject by the Cardiff stipendiary magistrate, who had had much experience of prosecutions under the Sunday Closing Act. Speaking in January 1895 of his experience on the Bench under the Sunday-closing Act, he said—

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) moved that the question be now put.

*MR. SPEAKER: I cannot put that Motion, considering that the discussion has not lasted an hour, and that the Bill only came from the printers after the hour when the House met.

*MR. HOWELL said that the observations of the magistrate to which he wished to call attention were the following:—

> "On the day when licensed houses are closed there is a demand by a large section of the community for intoxicating liquor, and that demand——"

And it being Half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday, 9th February.

FACTORY ACTS (FISHING TRADE) BILL.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, stated that in the Factory Acts there were certain exemptions as to the fishing trade so as to allow the curing of fish immediately on being landed—a process which was absolutely necessary. Recently a narrower construction had been put on the saving clause in the Act, with the result that 50 or 60 prosecutions had been begun, but were suspended by the Home Office in the hope that this Bill would pass into law and thus render the procedure in these prosecutions unnecessary. He had received letters from the Home Secretary and the right hon.

Gentleman's predecessor in favour of the Bill. He trusted, therefore, that as the question was urgent the House would allow the Second Reading to be taken now.

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said the Bill was an important one, but it had only been issued the previous morning. He asked his hon. Friend to postpone the Committee stage for a week in order to give time for the Scottish fishing interest to examine its provisions.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT: I will most readily do so.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday next.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [26th January] further adjourned till To-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY).

Committee thereupon deferred till To-morrow.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend certain provisions of the Local Government Act, 1894, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, and Mr. Bill; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 93.]

Sir A. Rollit.

ACCOUNTANTS (SCOTLAND.)

Bill to amend the Law relating to Accountants in Scotland, and to regulate their qualifications and provide for their registration, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Campbell, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Cox, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Faithfull Begg; presented and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 31st March, and to be printed.—[Bill 94.]

TENANT RIGHT IN TOWNS (IRELAND).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Tenant Right in Towns in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Carew, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. J. P. Farrell; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday, 2nd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 95.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Carew; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday, 22nd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 96.]

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) (NO. 2).

Bill to give facilities to Leaseholders for the purchase of the fee simple of their holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kearley, Mr. Samuel Evans, Mr. Field, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Luttrell, and Mr. Channing; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. —[Bill 97.]

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS.

Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Sale of Food and Drugs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kearley, Sir James Wodehouse, Mr. Horace Plunkett, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Nicol, Mr. Channing, Mr. Lough, and Mr. Maurice Healy; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday, 18th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 98.]

INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT AND INCORPORATED BUILDING SOCIETIES (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE).

Bill to give facilities to Industrial and Provident and Incorporated Building Societies for the purchase of the Fee Simple of their holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. H. J. Wilson, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Lambert, and Mr. Crilly; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 23rd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 99.]

House Adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 28th January 1897.

ADDRESS.

The Queen's Answer to the Address of Tuesday the 19th instant reported; and Address and Answer to be printed and published.

EARL OF LIMERICK.

Petition of William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Earl of Limerick, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS AND CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

Moved to resolve, That it is desirable that all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament (*The Lord Chancellor*), agreed to: Ordered that a Message be sent to the Commons to communicate this resolution, and to desire their concurrence.

INCREASE IN THE ARMY.

VISCOUNT DE VESCI gave notice that on Monday he would ask the Secretary of State for War whether it was the intention of her Majesty's Government to lay before Parliament proposals for an increase in the strength of the Army, and, if so, in what arms? By what number of battalions it was proposed to increase the strength of the infantry; whether it was proposed to add to the Brigade of Guards and in what manner; whether, if the strength of the Brigade of Guards was increased, it was proposed to place the Brigade on the roster for foreign service in time of peace, and under what conditions?

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE PRIME MINISTER (The MARQUESS OF SALISBURY): I do not know whether it is agreeable to my noble Friend to adjourn until Monday? I believe that Lord Lansdowne has a matter of some importance to bring forward on that day, but I have heard of nothing for to-morrow.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY formally signified assent.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 28th January 1897.

STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, that the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of thirteen Members:—Mr. Buchanan, Sir William Coddington, Mr. John Edward Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Sir Edward Gourley, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. James Lowther, Sir John Lubbock, Sir John Mowbray, Mr. William Redmond, Sir Mark Stewart, and Mr. Whitmore were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

SELECTION.

Ordered, that the Committee of Selection do consist of eleven Members:—Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir John Dorington, Sir William Hart Dyke, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Justin McCarthy, Sir George Osborne Morgan, Mr. Philip Stanhope, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Wodehouse and the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

QUESTIONS.

CANADA AND AUSTRALASIA (CABLE).

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Conference on the telegraph cable to connect the Canadian Dominion with the Australasian Colonies has concluded its labours; and whether any approximate date can be given at which their Report can be presented to Parliament?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Committee has made its Report, but as that Report will be the subject of confidential discussions between her Majesty's Government and the representatives of the Colonial Governments, no date can at present be given for its presentation to Parliament.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES.

MR. E. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why any person residing or having offices within the registration limits of the metropolis who may desire to procure a certificate of birth must suffer the inconvenience and loss of time of a personal application by himself or on his behalf while those who do not live within that area can obtain one through the post; and whether the procedure can be altered so as to relieve dwellers in London from this disability?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I have communicated with the Registrar General, and he states that the Registration Acts make no provision for searching or obtaining Certificates at the General Register Office by means of correspondence. The imperfect information possessed by applicants renders such procedure often difficult and sometimes impossible. Nevertheless, as a matter of grace, the Registrar General assists the public on the point, as far as possible. When fairly clear information is given, he causes searches to be made and certificates furnished on application through the post from the provinces, but these applications through the post add very much to the work of the office, which could not be carried on with the present staff if certificates were supplied generally through the post. The Registrar General finds it absolutely necessary, in order to prevent the obstruction of official business, that applicants within a reasonable distance of the General Register Office shall attend, or employ some one to attend personally, as contemplated in Section 37 of the 6 and 7 Will. IV., chap. 86.

WOOL SORTING.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a Departmental Committee reported last year that wool sorting should be scheduled as a dangerous trade; whether special rules have been framed for the trade; and whether any information upon the subject can be made public for consideration in the West Riding.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): A recommendation that wool sorting should be certified as a dangerous trade was made last year by a Departmental Committee, and it was so certified accordingly. Special rules were at once prepared, but suggestions were made by the workmen at the eleventh hour requiring further investigations by the Committee which were only recently completed. The rules are now in the printer's hands, and will be ready for issue shortly; they will be served in the usual course upon the occupiers of works in which hair or wool (other than British wool) is sorted.

HOUSEBREAKING (LIVERPOOL ASSIZES).

MR. H. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) in view of the following facts, namely, that one Hugh Beattie was, on 17th November, 1896, convicted at Liverpool Assizes of breaking and entering a dwelling-house at Rainhill on 8th August, 1895, and sentenced to five years' penal servitude, and that one John Brady was previously convicted and sentenced for the same offence, and that there are now two prisoners suffering punishment for the offence of which, on the evidence of the prosecution in Brady's case, only one can possibly be guilty, whether he proposes to take any, and what, steps in the matter; and (2) whether it is the fact that John Brady was convicted on the uncorroborated testimony of a single witness, and that Beattie, who subsequently pleaded guilty to the same offence, swore on his oath that Brady was not concerned in the robbery, and that he, Beattie, committed it alone and and unassisted.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The statement of facts in the first paragraph of the Question is not quite complete. It should be added that Beattie pleaded guilty at the same time to six other indictments as well as the one referred to. As regards the second paragraph, it is not the fact that Brady was convicted on the uncorroborated testimony of one witness, other facts being proved at the trial which, in the opinion of the learned Judge, strongly confirmed the witness in question. After making most careful inquiries into the case, and consulting the Judge—who finds nothing in what has occurred subsequently to the trial to make him doubt that the prisoner Brady was properly convicted—I have come to the conclusion that there is no ground for any interference on my part.

BOAT ACCIDENTS (ROYAL NAVY).

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state how many accidents to boats of Her Majesty's ships of war attended by loss of life took place during the year 1896, and how many lives were lost in all by these accidents; and whether he can also state if inquiry was held in each case to ascertain the cause of the accident, and can inform the House what the cause was in each case?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): There were three accidents to boats of Her Majesty's ships attended with loss of life in 1896. An inquiry was held in each case. I cannot within the limits of an answer across the floor of the House give the history of each case. Two were under oars and one under sail in a regatta. I would remind the hon. Member that there are 300 ships in commission, not to speak of those commissioned for the manœuvres, involving an enormous amount of boat work under all conditions of weather, and that the officers and men of the fleet cannot but resent the prominence given to these very rare accidents without any reference to the magnitude of the services safely performed.

PARCELS POST (SWITZERLAND).

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been directed to the clause in the new Agreement as to the Parcel Post between this country and Switzerland, by which it is declared that in fixing the rate of postage for parcels 2 francs 35 cents is to be considered the equivalent of 2s., and 2 francs 85 cents the equivalent of 2s. 5d., whereas, by the current rate of exchange, the sums should be 1s. 10½d. and 2s. 3d. respectively; and, will he explain what is the reason for this additional charge upon the British as compared with the Swiss public for precisely the same service?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): Owing to the difference both in the currency and in the weights of this country and Switzerland, it is not practicable to fix precisely the same charge for the same service in both directions. For example, the postage of 2s. referred to by the hon. Member covers the conveyance to Switzerland of a parcel weighing 7 lb.; whereas the highest weight transmissible from Switzerland to this country for the corresponding sum of 2 francs 35 cents is 3 kilogrammes, or only 6 lb. 9 oz., and for a 7 lb. parcel 2 francs 85 cents would have to be paid. In the case of parcels sent at the lowest postage in the scale, the advantage to the English sender is considerable; for, the postage being practically identical in both countries, a weight of 13 oz. more can be sent for the same money from England to Switzerland than is transmissible in the opposite direction. The fact is that parcels of under 7 lb. weight can be sent a little more cheaply from England to Switzerland than from Switzerland to England, while with parcels of over 7 lb. the opposite is true.

ARMENIAN REFUGEE KILLED IN LONDON.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an Armenian refugee has been kicked to death by a crowd in Bermondsey; and, whether any special precautions are considered necessary for the protection of these foreigners while in London?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: It is, unhappily, the case that an Armenian has died from an internal injury caused by a kick which he received in the streets. The facts appear to be these. He had gone out for a walk with another Armenian, and a number of lads, attracted by the oddness of their costume, set upon them in rough horseplay, eventually throwing the one down and, it is said, kicking him, while the other escaped. It appears that he then made his way back to the shelter where he was staying, and, complaining of internal pains—there were no external marks of violence visible—was taken to a hospital, where he was discovered, after his death, to have been suffering from a ruptured spleen. The police lost no time in taking action, and are doing their utmost to capture the principal offender. ["Hear, hear!"] There is no reason whatever to suppose that the fact of his being an Armenian had anything to do with the assault—[*cheers*]—and I do not think that any special protection is required for these foreigners. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): Will any indemnity be paid?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: That is a question I am not prepared to answer at present.

TREASON-FELONY PRISONER (DUFF.)

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the present mental condition of the man Duff, one of the treason-felony prisoners removed from Portland Prison to Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, and whether there is any hope of his recovering his mind?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The prisoner, John Duff, is still suffering from delusions, and his mental state shows no sign of improving. Except, however, on subjects connected with his delusions he converses rationally. I should add that Duff was convicted of manslaughter, and is not one of the treason-felony prisoners.

LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES ACT. TRACTION ENGINES.

MR. A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will explain why no decision has yet been arrived at on the application made by several makers of traction engines to the Board to have new patterns of wheels legalised under the Light Locomotives Act of last year; and whether, although a considerable time has elapsed since this application was made, and considering the damage alleged to be done, especially on pavements, by the only existing legal pattern, the Board will legalise some improved pattern or patterns as soon as possible?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Local Government Board have as yet only received applications for approval of one particular pattern of wheel under the Light Locomotives Act of last Session. The Board were anticipating that they would receive several applications of this character, and proposed to defer their Inquiry into the subject until the different applications could be considered together. If, however, within a short period no further applications are made to the Board, they will proceed to consider the question as regards the one application which they have before them.

BOG SLIDE (KERRY).

MR. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the extensive destruction of property resulting from the recent bog slide in the county of Kerry, whereby numbers of people have been reduced to a condition of complete destitution, he will direct, after due inquiry into the state of the case, that funds be provided for their relief either by the Congested Districts Board or by the Government?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Congested Districts Board took a very early opportunity of considering to what extent they could help in remedying the results of the disaster referred to in the question, and they have received special reports on the matter which were considered at a special meeting held on the 27th inst. One of the results of the bog slide is that a ford over which carts used to pass has been swept away and the bed of the river lowered at the place by from 3ft. to 4ft. The Board hope to erect a bridge to take the place of the ford and to repair the injury done to the road at each side of the ford. A limestone quarry, owned by the Earl of Kenmare, at which about twelve men have been usually employed, has been partially filled by the peat flow. The Board would be prepared to contribute towards the cost of opening or reopening a quarry in the neighbourhood, provided that it can be shown that such an attempt can be brought to a successful issue, and that the farmers of the surrounding congested districts will be supplied with limestone on advantageous terms. As regards clearing the lands at present covered with peaty matter, the Board would, in the interests of agriculture, consider what support might be given by them towards carrying out any well-considered scheme that may be submitted to them.

NEWRY BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it has come to his knowledge that the Local Government Board for Ireland has issued a writ against four Members of the Newry Board of Guardians for £21 6s. paid by the guardians to Philip M'Govern, of Glan, county Cavan, for services rendered in treating four patients sent to him as an hydrophobia specialist by the Board; and whether it is according to law for the Board to endeavour to recover by judgment in the Superior Courts a sum which they were compelled to pay by the judgment of the County Court?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have issued a writ against the Newry Board of Guardians, specially naming four members, for the recovery of a sum of money paid by the Guardians to Philip M'Govern in direct contravention of the law. In October, 1895, the Guardians passed resolutions that three men, and any other persons bitten by a mad dog who might thereafter apply, were to be sent for treatment to M'Govern, who claims to be able to cure hydrophobia. The Board pointed out to the Guardians that, M'Govern's farmhouse not being a recognised hospital within the meaning of the 25 and 26 Vic. cap. 83, Section 7, the Guardians were acting *ultra vires* in sending patients to him for treatment. Upon the presentation of M'Govern's bill the Guardians applied to the Board to sanction the expenditure, which the Board explained they had no power to do, and, as the account was not paid, M'Govern served the Guardians with a Civil Bill for the amount. The Guardians decided not to defend the process, and judgment went against them accordingly by default. The Attorney General has granted his fiat for the proceedings which are now being taken in the Superior Court.

PRISON VISITING COMMITTEES.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will include in future reports of the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons a return of the number of meetings held and visits paid by the Visiting Committee of each prison (including convict prisons), in a form similar to that which has for many years been given in the reports of the General Prisons Board for Ireland as regards Irish prisons?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: There are of course no Visiting Committees at the convict prisons; but I see no objection to including in future reports a return of the meetings and visits of the Visiting Committees of local prisons, and of the visitors of convict prisons, and have given directions accordingly.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Thank you.

PRISON OFFICERS' INSTRUCTION.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether the first training school for prison officers was started at Chelmsford on the 1st October, according to the intention announced in the last report of the Prison Commissioners; and (2) if so, what is the number of officers now going through a course of instruction?

*SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said the answer to the first part of the question is—Yes; to the second—Sixteen.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether any large reduction in the Constabulary Force in Ireland is contemplated by the Government; and (2) whether he can state how many Divisional Commissioners or Resident Magistrates are to be disemployed, and to what extent the lower grades of the force are to be reduced?

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the nature of the contemplated reduction in the strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force, and the anticipated saving in the annual expenditure thereby?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is proposed to effect a considerable reduction in the strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary by allowing the force to waste down, through retirements and the stoppage of recruiting, by 605 men, after which the strength of the force will stand at 10,830. The gross reduction to be effected on the Constabulary Vote during the next financial year is estimated at £39,000, but against this there is an increase under the head of Pensions of £18,000. The ultimate saving arising out of the proposed reduction is estimated at £60,000 per annum. As regards the second paragraph of the question of the hon. Member for South Monaghan, there are no proposals at present under consideration for a diminution of the number of Divisional Commissioners or Resident Magistrates.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the cost of the Royal Irish Constabulary has increased from 10¾d. per head of the population in 1836 to 6s. 4d. per head in 1895; (2) how many extra police are at present maintained at the Depôt, Dublin, and what was the cost of same in the last financial year; and (3) will he, in view of the peaceful condition of Ireland, consider the advisability of reducing the strength of the Royal Irish Constabularly force, and applying the moneys which might be saved by the reduction to the material improvement of Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The figures quoted in the first paragraph of the Question are approximately correct. There are no extra police employed at the Depôt. The force there consists of men of the reserve and of recruits in training for vacancies in the country, and these men, financially, form part of the Constabulary Force at large. The suggestion in the third paragraph forms part of a large question on which the hon. Member will hardly expect me to express an opinion at present.

DAUNT'S ROCK LIGHTSHIP.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that four of the former crew of the *Puffin* are still alive, the master, lamplighter, and two men, they will be utilised as witnesses in the public inquiry as to the history and condition of the lightship, irrespective of her being raised or not?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): When I answered the supplementary Question of the hon. Member for Cork City on Monday I was not aware of the facts referred to in the hon. Member's Question. Under those circumstances the Inquiry will proceed irrespective of the raising of the lightship.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is in a position to say what provision has been made for the relatives of the men lost by the foundering of the lightship *Puffin?*

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir. The list is too long to read, but I shall be happy to hand the hon. Member a copy.

LAND COMMISSION (COUNTY LEITRIM).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a sitting of the Land Commission had been fixed for the 4th December last at Manorhamilton, County Leitrim, but that on the 3rd December Mr. H. P. Ringwood wired from Morrison's Hotel, Dublin, to Michael M'Goldrick, of Ghurteen, Drumnacross, and six other farmers informing them that the sitting had been indefinitely postponed; by whose authority was the sitting indefinitely postponed; will he see that those farmers who had arranged for the hearing of their cases on the day fixed will be compensated for the loss they have sustained by the postponement; and have the cases of Michael M'Goldrick and the others been heard yet; and, if not, when will they be heard?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR : The sitting referred to in the Question was arranged for the 4th ult. as stated. Instructions were issued by the Irish Land Commission to the Sub-Commissioners not to hear more cases than would occupy them and could be disposed of up to Christmas, as, owing to the appointment of a number of new Assistant Commissioners, the constitution of the different Sub-Commissions to take up work after Christmas had to be recast. In consequence of this direction Mr. Ringwood had to notify the postponement of the cases referred to. A necessary adjournment such as took place in this case does not appear to afford a reason for compensation. The cases have not yet been heard, but will be probably heard early in March.

ERASMUS SMITH SCHOOLS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that in the draft scheme for the educational endowments founded by Erasmus Smith, published 14th May 1892 (Seventh Schedule, page 38), the gross rental of the estates is given as £9,109 7s. 5d., and that the Governors invested in Government stock £14,679 2s. 2d.; allowing for interest on this investment, what has caused the difference of £1,931 between the gross income of 1891 and the alleged gross income of 1896; did the Vice Chancellor (Report 1885–6, page 102) give the gross rental as £10,014 at a time when judicial rents had been fixed on most of the Erasmus Smith estates; and how, then, is the difference between the £10,014 gross rental in 1885 and £9,109 gross rental in 1891 explained?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR : I have called for a report on this question, and hope to have it by Monday next.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government has approved the arrangement announced by Earl Grey in a report to the British South Africa Company, dated 16th October, for paying certain indunas in Matabeleland a salary of £5 a month each in consideration of their assisting the Native Commissioners to maintain order in their several districts, and particularly to collect hut-tax and obtain labour for the mines; and whether, before the proposed new rules for the collection of hut-tax are sanctioned, he will satisfy himself that they do not afford opportunities for extortion and a modified form of slavery?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : The arrangement referred to has not yet been approved. Lord Grey has been informed that any settlement of a permanent character, including such arrangements, will have to be fully considered by Her Majesty's Government. I shall, of course, satisfy myself that the new policy does not lend itself to extortion or to a modified form of slavery. [*Cheers.*]

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of stipendiary magistrates now employed in Ireland; what was the cost of the last financial year; and, are the appointments of those magistrates permanent; and, if not, will he consider the advisability of abolishing the office of stipendiary magistrates in

Ireland, or, at least, of substantially reducing the expenditure on that class of public servants?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The number of resident magistrates now employed in Ireland is 69, and the total expenditure on this service in the financial year ended March 31, 1896, amounted to £47,466. This sum was inclusive of salaries, allowances, and travelling expenses. These magistrates are permanent Civil servants.

TENANT'S APPLICATION FOR REINSTATEMENT (COUNTY CARLOW).

Mr. JOHN HAMMOND (Carlow): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether in the case of Michael Waters, tenant, D. Pack Beresford, landlord (No. 19, Carlow), in which an application for reinstatement was lodged by the evicted tenant with the Land Commission, any and what grounds were assigned by the landlord for withholding his consent to reinstatement?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The landlord in his objection did not state the grounds upon which he withheld his consent.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING.

Mr. D. N. NICOL (Argyll): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary of State for Scotland has been able to make definite arrangements for the protection of line fishermen from the depredations of beam trawlers on the coast of Scotland?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): I am now able to inform my hon. Friend that the matter has been under the consideration of the Government, and that it has been decided to make additional provision for this service.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) whether the negotiations which have been in progress during the last few months between the Scottish Office and other Departments in regard to the question of a more effective sea police around the coast of Scotland are not sufficiently advanced to enable Her Majesty's Government to announce the policy which it proposes to adopt in order to protect the interests of line fishermen against the depredations of trawlers; (2) whether, having regard to the fact that the Secretary for Scotland has recommended that line fishermen should assist the Government in bringing to justice persons engaged in illegal trawling, he is aware that a fine of 5s. was imposed on each of the crew of the steam trawler *Amy Gertrude*, of North Shields, for assault, and that when detected in illegal trawling in Lochbattle, Skye, on the 31st October last, by the fishing boat *Janet*, of Plockton, they assaulted the fishing boat's crew with stones and an iron bar, and attempted to run her down; and (3) whether he is aware that the trawler's number was concealed, and that this offence was not punished by the Court?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: To the first part of the hon. Member's question I have already replied. As regards the second, a fine of 5s. for assault was imposed on each of the crew of the trawler referred to. On consideration of the precognitions, it appeared to the prosecutor that the evidence was insufficient to prove concealment of the number; and this charge accordingly was not made.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the fact that Her Majesty's Government have requested the assistance of the line fishermen of Scotland to catch and identify persons engaged in illegal trawling, it is proposed to reward the master and crew of the fishing boat *Janet*, of Plockton, Ross-shire, who, at the imminent risk of their lives, were recently instrumental in obtaining a conviction against the master and crew of the steam trawler *Amy Gertrude*, of North Shields, for illegal trawling in Lochbattle, Skye, on the 31st October last?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: As the hon. Member is aware it is not the practice to offer pecuniary rewards to such members of the public as assist to bring delinquents to justice, and there are no special reasons to make an exception in the present case.

COLLISION AT SEA (H.M. GUNBOAT "LANDRAIL" AND S.S. "SIREN.")

MR. J. GILHOOLY (Cork, Co., W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Government will compensate John Sullivan and the other members of the crew of the *Siren* for the loss of their property on the occasion of that ship being negligently run into and sunk by Her Majesty's gunboat *Landrail* last July when making for Portland Harbour?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The Admiralty are under no legal obligation to pay compensation for damage or loss occasioned by collision with H.M. ships, but as an act of grace, they have obtained the consent of the Treasury to compensate the officers and crew of the *Siren* in respect of the proved loss of their kits. The detailed claims rendered by them are now under consideration.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is prepared to move or support a proposal for a Select Committee to consider the operation and effects of the Merchandise Marks Acts?

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; I am prepared to assent to such a proposal if made by my hon. Friend?

VACCINATION (ROYAL COMMISSION.)

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if it is proposed to publish the evidence given before the Royal Commission on Vaccination during the autumn of 1891 and in 1892 and 1893, also the Reports of the Sub-Commissioners on small-pox epidemics since 1891; and, when it is probable such documents will reach the hands of Members?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have made inquiry of the Royal Commission on Vaccination and have been informed that some of the Reports in question will be issued almost immediately and that all are in the hands of the printers.

IRISH MILITIA.

MR. F. A. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if, regarding the statement of the War Authorities that it is their intention to send five regiments of Irish Militia to England this year for military training, he will consider the question as an equivalent of dispatching a similar number of English Militia regiments to Ireland for the same purpose?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The only regiments of Irish militia brought to England for their training are artillery regiments, which are trained in the fortresses they would be required to garrison in case of war. There are no corresponding reasons for sending English militia to Ireland.

KING PREMPEH.

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Prempeh, late King of Ashanti, has memorialised the Colonial Office, asking for the carrying out of promises made to him by British officers previous to the late expedition to Kumassi, to the effect that if no resistance was offered the matter would be settled amicably; whether Prempeh gave assurances that he would make full submission and accept the British terms, and pay the indemnity demanded of him in due course, if a reasonable time were allowed; whether any resistance whatever was offered to the advance of the British troops by Prempeh or his chiefs, who had made proclamation throughout the King's territory that all weapons should be removed to the interior, and that no opposition should be offered to the expedition; will he explain why, after these assurances, the King was deposed and made prisoner along with several of his chiefs, and the British soldiers who had been permitted to march without resistance to Kumassi afterwards looted the King's house and dug up the graves of dead chiefs in search of treasure; and, whether he will lay a copy of Prempeh's petition upon the Table of the House?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: A petition signed by Prempeh has been received, but the statements contained in it materially misrepresent the facts. In December 1895 and January 1896, while the expedition was on its way to Kumassi, the Governor of the Gold

Coast sent messages requiring Prempeh to make full submission and to pay the cost of the expedition; no promise, however, was then made by Prempeh to pay this indemnity, and no reliance can be placed on the statement made in his petition that he would pay it if a reasonable time were allowed. No resistance was offered at Kumassi, but the Governor received no message reporting the removal of all weapons. Sir W. Maxwell reported, however, that in October 1895, messengers from Kumassi arrived in Samory's camp who invited him to help Prempeh "to recover all countries from the coast to Gaman which formerly belonged to Ashanti." I dare say the hon. Member knows that Samory is a powerful chief who has been slave-raiding in the Hinterland. On December 25th, the King of Bekwai informed us that although he had pressed Prempeh to comply with the demands of the British Government the latter had refused, and the reports from other chiefs proved the constant aim of Prempeh to have been the re-establishment of the old limits of Ashanti with its necessary consequences of slave-raiding and human sacrifices. The deportation of Prempeh was under the circumstances necessary, and without it the expedition could not have realised the objects for which it was intended. The articles found in the King's house were taken possession of by the officer commanding the expeditionary force, and have been fully described and accounted for. Further papers relating to the affairs of Ashanti will be laid before Parliament, and Prempeh's petition will be included.

Mr. DAVITT: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has received newspapers from the Gold Coast written by Englishmen confirming all the statements made in the petition?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; but even if I had, I should not take *ex parte* and anonymous statements as being evidence against the statement of the Governor. [*Cheers.*]

TRANSVAAL RAID.

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether copies of the Report of the Select Committee appointed

by the Cape Parliament to inquire into the Transvaal Raid can be obtained at the Vote Office; and, if not, whether he will make arrangements for the supply of copies to hon. Members on their application?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Copies of the Report and of one of the appendices containing the principal telegrams can be supplied to the hon. Member from the Colonial Office, on his application, but the evidence has not been reprinted in this country. The Cape Parliamentary paper is, however, on sale by Simpkin, Marshall and Company, Limited. It is a volume of 760 pages.

CRIMEAN VETERAN (JOHN BRENNAN).

Mr. JASPER TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been directed to the destitute condition of a Crimean veteran named John Brennan, of Boyle, formerly a private in the 41st Regiment, who was wounded in the attack on Sebastopol; and whether he would recommend that an additional grant be made to him from the fund for the relief of destitute war veterans?

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Yes, Sir. The hon. Member has himself directed my attention on two previous occasions to this man's case. I can only repeat that there is no record of his having been wounded while in the Army, and that his short service of only two and-a-half years does not qualify him for a special campaign pension.

ARMY PENSION (JOHN KELLY).

Mr. TULLY: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the authorities have received a memorial signed by the local magistrates and clergymen praying that an increase of pension be granted to a wounded soldier named John Kelly, of Ballindoon, county Sligo, who when serving with the Connaught Rangers in the Kaffir War in 1875, had one of his legs shot away, and who is now unable to support himself, his wife, and eight children on the small pension which he was granted; and whether, under the circumstances, he will recommend an increase of pension to this man?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: John Kelly made an application to the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, and they have raised his pension from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a day in consequence of increased disability arising from the original cause of his discharge.

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): May I ask whether the hon. Gentleman is aware that the recent Committee which inquired into the affairs of the Patriotic Fund ascertained that there is a surplus available for such purposes as these, amounting to a quarter of a million of money.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order! That question does not arise out of the question on the paper.

DISTRESS (WEST OF IRELAND).

MR. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has yet to hand; the Report of the Local Government Board Inspector who has been inquiring into the extent of the distress at present existing in the West of Ireland; if he has so received the Report, can he state the conclusion arrived at as to the condition of the people living in the unions of Belmullet, Killala, and Ballina; and if he has not as yet received the Report in question, can he say when he expects to receive it?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Report referred to is not a Report from the Poor Law Inspector in charge of these districts, but from one of the Commissioners of the Local Government Board who was directed to make a special inquiry. I expect to receive his Report in the course of a day or two.

PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND).

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the net expenditure as shown in the Sixty-fourth annual Report of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, from which it appears that, while a decrease in expenditure in Class I., Public Works and Railways, to the amount of £52,390 is shown, an increase in Class II., Public Works Office, of £728 is likewise given on comparing the expenditure in 1894–5 with 1895–6: and, whether it is a rule in the Irish Office of Works that officials should obtain more pay when there is shown to be a substantial falling off in moneys voted for Public Works services?

MR. HANBURY: Owing to the gradual completion of railway schemes under the Act of 1889, there was a reduction of expenditure in 1895–96 of £52,390 as compared with 1894–95. Moneys are provided for public services from other sources in addition to Votes, and the total payments by the Board of Works for 1895–6, show an increase of £39,405 over 1894–5, and their receipts an increase of £7,142. On the 31st March 1896, there were nearly 3,000 more loan accounts open in the books of the Board than on the 31st March 1895. The increase in the Vote for the Board of Works for 1895–6 is partly due to automatic increments of salary, partly to increased provision for professional services, chiefly those of engineers and architects, and to increased travelling to expedite the inspection and reports on works and loans.

KILCREA ABBEY (COUNTY CORK).

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps will be taken to carry out the work necessary for the preservation of Kilcrea Abbey, county Cork; and, why the Report on the state of this national and ancient monument is given under head 4 as being a ruin vested and repaired in Appendix H to the Sixty-fourth Report of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, it being stated under sub-head 10 that further works must be held over for the present?

MR. HANBURY: Periodical inspections are made of structures of this character which are vested in the Board of Works, and the last Report represents the ruins as being in a fair state of preservation. If, on the occasion of the next inspection, works of preservation are found necessary, they will be executed. The Report is given under head 4 (ruins vested and repaired) because subsequently to the date of vesting works were carried out at the structure.

RAILWAYS (MID-CORK).

Dr. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if any further developments have taken place in connection with the proposed extensions of either of the lines of railway in Mid-Cork from Peak or Macroom to Ballyvourney; and, if so, what financial assistance will be given by Government, and under what terms?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The proposed lines have been considered by the Government, but I cannot hold out any hope that I shall be able to advise the Lord Lieutenant to certify either scheme under the first clause of the Act of last year.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state in what respect the time table for the new Irish mail service as now fixed differs from that announced by the Postmaster General last year; and if he will give the hour of arrival and departure respectively from Kingstown instead of Dublin?

Mr. HANBURY: As it would be very difficult in answering a question to state all the hours contained in the various time tables, I will lay on the Table a statement showing—(1) the present hours; (2) the hours proposed to be fixed last year; (3) the hours now decided on. The table shall show the hours at Kingstown as well as at Dublin.

TRUNK TELEPHONE LINE (CORK AND DUBLIN).

Mr. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the intention of the Post Office to construct a trunk telephone line between Cork and Dublin, announced last year, has been carried out; and if not, what the cause of the delay is?

Mr. HANBURY: The construction of the trunk telephone line from Dublin to Cork and Limerick is in progress, and the work will be pushed on with all reasonable speed. The Postmaster General is not aware that any delay has taken place.

WEST INDIAN COLONIES (CABLE).

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the benefits which such a connection would confer on the development of our West Indian Colonies, Her Majesty's Government have come to any conclusion with reference to the continuation to the British West Indian Colonies of the telegraphic cable communication from Halifax to Bermuda?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The matter is engaging the active attention of Her Majesty's Government.

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

Mr. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the effect of the new orders issued for the holding of parish council elections will be to render ineligible for election on 18th March all those who have entered into residence on 25th March 1896, 25th March being the day upon which most people in rural districts enter into residence; whether he will take steps to have this disqualification removed; and whether he will remove the new difficulty which the orders place in the way of electors who may desire a poll?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Having regard to the statutory provisions as to the first meeting of a parish council after their election and the notice required to be given of such meeting, the Local Government Board were obliged to fix a date earlier than 25th March for the meeting for the election of parish councillors, so as to admit of the requisite time being given for the different proceedings in the case of a poll being demanded. The difficulty to which the hon. Member alludes could only be removed by legislation. With respect to the question as to the demand of a poll, the position of the Board in this matter is that they have not themselves in their order made any provision on the subject, but have left the question to the operation of the statute itself.

INJURIES TO WORKMEN (FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS).

MR. FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to recent judgments in the Port of Hamburg whereby Hamburg workmen, injured by the alleged negligence of a British shipowner, recovered damages with the alternative of the arrest of such British shipowner or his servants, and their punishment criminally; whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, under the English Law as it at present stands, a British workman cannot recover compensation from the owner resident abroad of a Foreign ship, although such workman may have been injured by the negligence of such owner or his servants, and although such Foreign ship may be arrested in respect of claims of a different character; and whether the Government will consider the advisability of introducing into the Bill to amend the Law of Employment increased protection to British workpeople from the consequences of negligence of Foreign shipowners or their officials?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have not seen the judgments to which the hon. Member refers, but I will communicate with the Board of Trade upon the question which he raises and which I believe is also being brought under the consideration of the House by a private Member's Bill.

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND).

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he intends to proceed this Session with the Bill on Poor Relief in Ireland which was read the First time last Session.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, but the Bill is not quite ready, as I wish to introduce some changes from the draft of last Session.

ALIEN PAUPER LUNATIC (SCOTLAND).

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) if his attention has been called to the hardship imposed by law on a parish which has been compelled to afford relief to an alien pauper lunatic becoming chargeable on the rates of such parish; and (2) if he can see his way to free the rates from such a burden by extending the costs of chargeability over a wider area than one parish by legislation or otherwise?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: So long as the parish system is retained, cases of hardship of the kind mentioned by my hon. Friend must occasionally occur, but will tend to distribute themselves equally. I may point out, however, that so far as the obligation to relieve is concerned, there is no difference between an alien lunatic and a native lunatic without a known settlement. In reply to the second part of the Question, the occasional nature of the case complained of is a sufficient argument against making alterations in a system which works well.

CAPE COLONY (SIR J. SIVEWRIGHT).

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) had given notice of the following Question:—

> "To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a speech made by Sir James Sivewright, a Cape Minister, at Worcester, in which Sir J. Sivewright stated that emissaries from the Transvaal had been deliberately stirring up disloyalty in Cape Colony; and whether Her Majesty's Government have any evidence in proof of this charge; and, if so, what action Her Majesty's Government propose to take?"

The hon. Member said that since the Question was put on the paper he had seen a statement that Sir James Sivewright had given a different version of his speech from that given in the papers at first.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I presume, therefore, that the hon. Member does not now put his Question. [*Laughter.*]

MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I should like to put the Question. ["Hear, hear!"] Is my right hon. Friend prepared to make any statement as to the accuracy or inaccuracy of the statement referred to?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member has already said that Sir James Sivewright has himself apparently contradicted the accuracy of the statement imputed to him. Under these circumstances I cannot possibly give an opinion as to what might hypothetically have been said by Sir James Sivewright, but what Sir James Sivewright himself said he did not say. [*Laughter.*]

AGRICULTURAL LAND RATING BILL (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Irish Agricultural Rating Bill will be introduced?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is not proposed to introduce an Irish Agricultural Rating Bill.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) asked to what purpose the money allocated to Ireland was to be applied, and whether it was not to be devoted to relieving the rates?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said the money would not be applied in that manner.

MR. KNOX asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to ascertain the views of the Irish Members before giving a decision?

[No answer was given.]

AGRICULTURAL RATES ORDER.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the inconveniences which will result from compliance with Article XV. of the Agricultural Rates Order, 1896, and in particular whether the form of rate applicable to special sanitary rates might not with great advantage be adopted in lieu of the form given in Schedule Y of the Order; and, whether, in agricultural districts, where nearly every assessment contains agricultural land, the Local Government Board will object to complete valuation lists being made out instead of supplementary lists?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Local Government Board have received representations with regard to the first and third points alluded to in the Question of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green. As regards the suggestion that the form of rate applicable to special sanitary rates might be adopted in lieu of the form given in Schedule Y of the Order, I may observe that no form of special sanitary rate is prescribed either by Statute or by the Orders of the Local Government Board. I infer, however, that what is suggested is that instead of showing the amount of the rate payable at a reduced rate in the £ in the case of agricultural land, the course which the Public Health Act allows, as regards the sanitary rate, of showing in the rate the reduced rateable value should be adopted. It is not considered by the Board that the course referred to would be more convenient than that contemplated by Schedule Y; and further, the Agricultural Rates Act only authorises the reduction of the rate in the £ and not of the rateable value.

SHUTTLE GUARDS.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, with reference to the case of David Pogson, of Marndon, who died from the effect of a blow from a flying shuttle in December last, as the loom was a fast Dobcross loom, known as a 70 to 80 pick per minute loom (as was shown at the Coroner's inquest), it was the duty of the District Inspector to have insisted on the looms in Messrs. James Crowther and Sons' mills, in which the accident happened, being fenced or protected, even prior to the late decision of the Recorder of Blackburn; and, can the Home Secretary, with the aid of experts, lay down or fix a limit of speed, taking into consideration the conditions of width of loom, etc., above which it shall be compulsory on all millowners in trades in which shuttles are used to have them efficiently protected by guards?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am satisfied that there has been no neglect of duty on the part of the Inspector. The use of shuttle guards has been gradually introduced and extended during the last few years, until the efforts of the Inspectors were suspended by the Blackburn decision, now reversed by the High Court. It is intended now to require the provision of these guards whenever serious danger, preventable by their use, is reasonably anticipated; but I have no power to lay down the limit of speed which shall be held to constitute danger, even if it were possible to make any rule.

LICENSED PAWNBROKERS (IRELAND).

MR. CRILLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can supplement the return laid upon the Table of the House on Tuesday, on the authority of the City Marshal of Dublin, by giving the total number of licensed pawnbrokers in the cities and towns of Ireland named in that return; and if he will direct that in future returns the number of licensed pawnbrokers in these cities and towns will be given in addition to the number of pawn tickets issued and the total sum advanced to borrowers?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The returns referred to were furnished by the City Marshal in pursuance of the Act 26 George III., cap. 43, Section 41, and Government cannot require him to include any information in these returns in addition to that prescribed by Statute. There would, however, be no objection to granting a separate return showing the number of licensed pawnbrokers in the cities and towns in Ireland if such a return be moved for by the hon. Member.

MISSING STEAMER ("STATE OF GEORGIA").

*MR. J. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Admiralty could despatch one of Her Majesty's ships to search for, or join in a search for, the British steamer *State of Georgia*, of Aberdeen, which is now about 20 days over due at Nova Scotia, to which she was bound, and which has, in the opinion of competent seafaring men, probably been caught in the ice fields in the western part of the North Atlantic Ocean, whence she might still be rescued were help promptly sent?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY: The whole of the squadron on the North American station is now cruising in the West Indies, more than 2,000 miles distant from the supposed position of the *State of Georgia.* With the best possible disposition to render aid in such circumstances, it is clear that timely rescue by them would be impossible. Halifax, on the other hand, is only distant from 500 to 600 miles, and though it is not perhaps for me to make the suggestion, it would seem that the readiest manner of ascertaining the facts as regards the unfortunate vessel, rendering help if not too late, is for a steamer to be chartered at Halifax to undertake the search.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to his speech on Friday last, whether he will direct Her Majesty's representatives in Austria, Belgium, and Germany to report on the provision made for the university education of Roman Catholics in those countries, with special reference to the constitution of the universities, the amount of their endowments, and the sources from which they have been derived, and the number of persons receiving university education in proportion to the Catholic population?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think the subject of the inquiry mentioned by the hon. Member is one of great interest, and I will ask the authorities at the Foreign Office how far Her Majesty's representatives abroad can assist in the matter.

*MR. LECKY (Dublin University) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would have any objection to extend the inquiries to other countries in Europe, America, and Australia in which there are large Roman Catholic populations!

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I cannot imagine that there would be any objection in principle to my hon. friend's proposal. Of course an inquiry in regard to the Colonies would not be conducted through the Foreign Office, but would be made through the Colonial Office.

QUEEN'S REIGN (TREASON-FELONY PRISONERS).

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the approaching celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the accession of the Queen to the Throne, the Government will consider the question of recommending to Her Majesty to signalise that commemoration by the granting of an amnesty to political offenders still undergoing terms of imprisonment under the Treason-felony or other Acts?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: As the hon. Member is aware, I have never admitted any distinction between persons convicted under the Treason-felony Act or the Explosives Act and other long-sentence prisoners. [“Hear.”]

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Augustus Henry Eden Allhusen, esquire, for the Borough of Salisbury.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LORD PENRHYN'S QUARRIES.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvon, Arfon) rose to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely—

> “the loss and privation arising from the dispute between employer and employed in the Penrhyn quarries, and the failure of the efforts under the Conciliation Act to terminate the dispute.”

*MR. SPEAKER asked whether it was the pleasure of the House that leave should be given, and thereupon the whole of the Opposition and several Unionist Members rose in their places. The requisite assent to the Motion having thus been signified,

MR. W. JONES said that for over 17 weeks the dispute at the Penrhyn quarries had been in progress and about 3,000 men had been thrown out of employment. The dispute had attracted considerable attention because it involved principles which, in their application, were not restricted to the local area of Bethesda, but were a matter of grave national concern. [*Cheers.*] It arose, in the first instance, from the dissatisfaction of the men employed with regard to some of the terms and conditions of their employment. Those terms had to do with the standard rate of wages, the system of large contracts and sub-letting and the conditions under which a class of unskilled workmen worked. The claim of the men with regard to these were a rise in the standard rate of wages, a minimum wage of 4s. 6d. a day; that large contracts should be abolished; that contracts should be confined to ordinary bargains, that they should be diminished in number and limited to monthly bargains. Their claims were formulated by a quarry committee, and this committee was a very important element indeed in the dispute. The committee consisted of delegates elected by the men working in the various galleries, and formed a sort of executive of the men. The important claim of the men was the recognition of this committee or any form of combination for protective purposes among the men whereby the negotiations could be carried on. This committee had never been recognised by Lord Penrhyn. [*Some Ministerial cheers.*] The question of wages, of contracts, and of sub-letting had become subsidiary ones to this—the right of combination among the quarrymen and the right to have access to their chosen spokesmen. This right had been persistently denied them. The men met at Bethesda and passed the following resolution:—

> “That we are of opinion that as workmen anxious to bring the present difference between us and our employer, if possible, to a peaceful settlement, it is our duty to call the attention of the Board of Trade to the matter, and to ask for their intervention under the provisions of the Conciliation Act of August, 1896.”

The workmen might be perfectly right, or they might be perfectly wrong—personally he believed they were in the right—but they were eager and willing to submit their whole case for inquiry to the Board of Trade. [*Cheers.*] On September 28, 71 men were suspended, including the whole of the members of the quarry committee, and 15 other men who had first opened up some of the grievances and enabled the committee to show that these grievances did exist. The same day the men met and resolved to support their committee, and to cease working until they were afforded an opportunity of explanation of this action on the part of the management. On the following day, in spite of the men's resolution and although the manager had actually received a copy of it, an effort was made to conclude bargains for the following month. The manager ignored the resolutions of the men, but none of the workmen took the bargains. [*Cheers.*] The same day a notice was posted in the quarry that the men who refused their bargains must remove their labour implements, and they were informed that the reasons for the suspension of the 71 men would be published in due course. When that document appeared it alleged against these 71 men insubordination, misrepresentation, and inciting the men to strike Since then the quarries had been laid idle. On September 30 an application was made, on behalf of the men, to the Board of Trade to take action, under Section 2 of the Conciliation Act, for the purpose of promoting a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Accordingly the Board of Trade communicated with Lord Penrhyn, and received an intimation that his lordship was prepared to have an interview with a deputation representing the men, of which none of the suspended quarrymen should be members. [*Ironical cheers.*] That proposal handicapped the men in this way, that they were to meet Lord Penrhyn without any of their trusted leaders or their chosen spokesmen. Under the strongest pressure from the Board of Trade the men yielded to this proposal. On December 5 the men met at Bethesda and resolved that three quarrymen should meet Lord Penrhyn;

> "that one or more representatives of the Board of Trade, should, if possible, be present at the first interview,"

and also—

> "that the deputation should be accompanied by its own interpreter, and also by its own shorthand writer if any notes of the proceedings are to be taken."

These seemed to be perfectly reasonable proposals. [*Cheers.*] Lord Penrhyn, writing to the Board of Trade on December 9, stated that he was prepared to receive the deputation—

> "upon receiving in writing a request from them to that effect, accompanied by their statement giving me an outline of the points which they propose to lay before me."

The Board of Trade considered this to be the imposition of fresh conditions and restrictions, and Sir Courtenay Boyle, in his letter to Lord Penrhyn, said:—

> "I am also to point out to you that the men only acceded to the suggestion that they should appoint a deputation not including any of the 71 suspended workmen who form their committee under the strongest pressure from the Board of Trade. Now that they have been induced with great difficulty to meet your wishes thus far, the Board of Trade would greatly regret if the opening of negotiations —always a difficult matter under such circumstances—should be rendered more difficult by the imposition of fresh conditions and restrictions."

As to the proposal that there should be a representative of the Board of Trade present at the interview, Lord Penrhyn said he must

> "decline to comply with such a suggestion, as my acceptance of it would establish a precedent for outside interference with the management of my private affairs."

He begged the House to listen to the striking reply of the Board of Trade—

> "I am to state that there is no desire to press the matter against your wishes, but I am to point out that in view of the provisions of the Conciliation Act, the Board cannot admit that the settlement of a prolonged dispute affecting some thousands of men and their families, can be rightly regarded as a matter of private interest only."

[*Cheers.*]

MR. W. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield): Will the hon. Member read the reply of Lord Penrhyn to that?

MR. W. JONES said he knew that in his letter Lord Penrhyn drew a distinction between the dispute and his private affairs, but he had given the House Lord Penrhyn's letter and the Board of Trade reply. [" Hear, hear! "] The next resolution had to do with the shorthand writer and interpreter—matters in the eyes of the Board of Trade, of detail not likely to cause serious difficulty. But how did Lord Penrhyn meet this trifling point?

> "I will, on this occasion, if pressed on the point, agree to it, provided that they are selected from amongst my late employés not included among the 71 who were suspended."

Let the House consider for a moment, how could anybody reasonably expect an interpreter from among quarrymen? There were 3,000 men, and from these their best and most trusted leaders were weeded out. A qualification for an interpreter was that he should think in two languages. How many men, with intellectual capacity, educational distinction, and a university training would be competent to think in two languages? How could it be reasonably expected that among these quarrymen they could get an interpreter able to interpret between Lord Penrhyn—who knew no Welsh—and workmen on the other hand, who, although they had a smattering of English sufficient to read English newspapers, did not think English, and had not facility of expression to express their thoughts on technical points in English? ["Hear, hear!"] Lord Penrhyn declined to assent to the conditions, and the Board of Trade unfortunately felt that they could not usefully take any further steps to promote the desired conference. Subsequently the quarry was closed, and by December 31 there was not a single workman at work at Bethesda. During the interval some of the men found employment elsewhere; hundreds of them scattered over North Wales in quest of labour, and hundreds could not get it, and were forced to remain at home with their families, idle. What sort of men were these, and did they deserve better treatment? They were among the most intelligent workmen in the whole British Empire. [*Cheers.*] They had built and maintained three schools, well staffed and equipped, and efficient as any in North Wales. ["Hear!"] They had lately subscribed nearly £1,000 towards the building and maintenance of an intermediate school in the vicinity—[*cheers*]—with physical and chemical laboratories such as would do credit to any such establishment in the Kingdom. They had scholarships and exhibitions for their boys at the schools, and when the School Committee had overdrawn its banking account by about £1,000, in order to provide playing-grounds, the men promised, as soon as they could get remunerative labour, they would find that £1,000. ["Hear!"] They had built some 20 chapels, and paid off the chapel debts. In addition—and showing that they were alive to the advantages of higher education—they had collected a sum amounting to £1,500 towards the University College at Bangor, and when last Tuesday week the new building was opened—though it was a time of strike and poverty—60 children appeared, 50 of whom were quarrymen's children, and two quarrymen and two ex-quarrymen were on the governing body. The Calendar showed this to be an almost crimeless district. Not long ago an inquiry was instituted as to the expediency of providing a new bench of magistrates for the district, but as the result of the inquiry, it was found that a bench of magistrates was absolutely and totally unnecessary, so few were the offences in the district. On the authority of the police, he could say that the offences were fewer now than they were before the strike. ["Hear, hear!"] Last Saturday week he passed through Bethesda, and saw hundreds of quarrymen congregated for a mass meeting to discuss proposals in notices set up by Lord Penrhyn's managers. There was perfect order, and no necessity to increase the staff of police. At the meeting the men applied remorseless logic to the notices of the quarry owner, but not a word of denunciation or disrespect was uttered against Lord Penrhyn himself. They discussed matters; they passed resolutions; they sang hymns. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The resolutions went to show that they would sternly abide by the proposals of the Board of Trade, and would not renounce their right to combination. ["Hear, hear!"] Meanwhile there were between 600 and 800 families supported by the relief fund which had been started by tradesmen and others in the district, and contributed to by workmen in all parts of the country. Money from all parts was flowing fast into the funds, and, thanks to the generosity of the Press, all classes of the community—men of all creeds and all political parties—had helped to support these men in maintaining the prolonged struggle. Money could do much, but it could not heal troubled minds, it could not bring solace and content to scattered homes and families; money could not settle a grave labour dispute. ["Hear, hear!"] He thanked the House for the attention given to his endeavour to put forward a plain statements of facts, and he desired to thank, on behalf of his constituents, the President of the Board of Trade and his able staff for their capable efforts to promote a settlement of this dispute under one of the sections of the

Conciliation Act. It was only for him, as Member for the constituency, to present this case, and make an earnest appeal to the Government and the President of the Board of Trade to take any measures open to them under the Conciliation Act or others—which they on their responsibility and with the great influence they could command—to bring the two parties together, and so help to secure what was the real wish of every one of these three thousand quarrymen—a just, honourable and lasting settlement of the dispute. [*Cheers.*] He formally moved the adjournment of the House.

MR. J. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion), in seconding the Motion, associated himself with the opening remarks of his hon. Friend upon the right of combination. Had this been solely a question as to amount of wages, or time for holidays, or any matter relating to the working of the quarry he would have had a great, if not an insuperable, objection to intervene in any way. But the question here involved was whether Welsh quarrymen should have the right such as was exercised by workmen all over the Kingdom, and which had, in this case, been denied—the right of combining to secure their joint interests. Lord Penrhyn seemed, to some extent, to make the concession that it would be unreasonable and unjust to refuse such right, because he had said he did not object to combination, but he did object to the committee. But the noble Lord had omitted to state how the right of combination could be exercised without a committee. It was useless to say that three thousand could combine but must not appoint a lesser number to carry out the decisions of the majority, and to negotiate with the employer. To say that they might combine, but that every individual workman was to make his representation to Lord Penrhyn, was to trifle with language. Seventy-one men had been suspended, and most of these were on the committee. Lord Penrhyn had stated that he could not submit to the intervention of the committee in the work of the quarry. Now, if the committee had interfered with the working, saying, "You shall work here, but stop work there," "You shall enlarge this gallery, and shoot rubbish here," then everybody would admit such interference would be intolerable. It was not interference of that description. The functions of the committee were the same as those which were carried out by agents of combinations of workmen all the world over. If a workman in the quarry felt that he had a grievance it was his duty to lay his complaint before the Committee, who inquired into it and ascertained whether there was any ground for bringing the matter to the attention of the managers. If the committee thought that the facts supplied by a workman disclosed a serious grievance, then it was their duty to consult and decide as to whether action ought to be taken in regard to it. The contention that the committee had no right to consider such matters was unreasonable. It had been alleged that the committee had supported, if not incited, insubordination amongst Lord Penrhyn's quarrymen. What was the alleged insubordination? Two workmen declined to go down to the office when requested to do so. He did not intend to go into the original cause of the dispute between Lord Penrhyn and his workmen; but it was necessary for him to state certain facts to make the case clear. The workmen complained, amongst other things, that instead of the quarry being let as hitherto to small bodies of men, huge portions of it were sub-let to contractors, who sweated the workmen by again sub-letting. Two men were deputed to make certain measurements on behalf of the committee, and they did so during their own dinner hour. Immediately Lord Penrhyn heard of this the two men were requested to go to the office for the purpose of being subjected to a cross-examination. Lord Penrhyn stated that he required two of his quarrymen to go to the quarry office, and that the committee were instrumental in preventing them, and that a resolution was passed that no quarryman should go alone to the office in order to have an interview with respect to the matters that were in dispute between the quarry committee and Lord Penrhyn. The resolution the men passed was that with respect to the matters in dispute between Lord Penrhyn and the quarrymen as a body, Lord Penrhyn should not try to go behind the committee by going to the workmen one by one and endeavouring to frighten them into submission. There was good reason for this resolution. Some of the men were sent for to the office and subjected to a cross-examination by Lord Penrhyn or his agent. The men were quite alone, and had none of their fellow-workmen to support them, and their knowledge of English was imperfect. It was a most unfair position to put the men in, a position unworthy of Lord Penrhyn. The majority of the men stood firm, but it was not a surprising thing that one or two of them did break down and back out. Then instant use was made of this circumstance to denounce the committee for having, as it was alleged, fabricated complaints and stimulated agitation, and all because those poor men had been frightened at this star chamber inquiry. The men who had been examined were suspended and afterwards dismissed, and the whole of the committee were also suspended. There was no suggestion that any one of those seventy-one men had been guilty of negligence in his work. The only reason assigned for this course was that they were on the committee, and gave certain advice. It was because the advice they gave to the men and the method they employed of conducting the controversy with him were not palatable to Lord Penrhyn that he took the action he did with regard to them. To say that men were liable to be dismissed because they were acting in the best interests of other workmen was to say that there was no right whatever of combination. He maintained that when men were appointed as a committee to act on behalf of their fellow-workmen, anything they did or said in such capacity ought to be entirely privileged. No employer should assume a right to visit with punishment anything done by those men in discharge of their duties as agents of the workmen. The position taken up by Lord Penrhyn on this part of the question was intolerable, and he hoped the House would show that it thought such an attitude on the part of an employer quite unreasonable. Lord Penrhyn spoke very strongly against outside interference, but it was not "outside interference" for the men to seek some assistance. The management of their labour was surely as much in their own hands and was as much an affair of the men as the management of the quarry was an affair of Lord Penrhyn's, and if Lord Penrhyn could not carry on his quarry without the assistance of 3,000 men, then the conditions of labour in the quarry were no longer simply a question of his private affairs, as Lord Penrhyn seemed to think. As Lord Penrhyn was perfectly entitled to go where he liked to select his manager or agent, the men had an equal right to choose their own agents. If the quarrymen had shown any disposition to interfere with Lord Penrhyn's selection of his agents, then he for one would have been strongly opposed to such an interference; but he said that they had not done so, and that Lord Penrhyn had no right to dictate to the men as he had done. They had as much right in that matter as Lord Penrhyn had. Some 3,000 men had now been out for four months; their dwelling houses were situate in the middle of a highly preserved estate, and yet not a single charge of poaching could be brought against any one of them, and no riot or disturbance was traceable to the strike. Not only so, but they had treated their employer with the greatest respect, and they had, indeed, passed a resolution protesting against being held responsible for language which they considered bore with some degree of severity, if not violence, upon Lord Penrhyn, and dissociating themselves from it. The men desired to do everything they could to meet Lord Penrhyn except to abdicate the ordinary rights of free men. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. DOUGLAS-PENNANT (Northants, S.) felt it his duty to take the very first opportunity of rising to reply to the observations which had been made against Lord Penrhyn and the management of the Penrhyn quarries, a very considerable number of mis-statements—["hear, hear!"]—having been made throughout the country in connection with this most unfortunate strike. There were two main points at issue before the House, namely, the question of Lord Penrhyn's attitude with regard to a Committee, and his attitude with regard to the intervention of the Board of Trade. [*Cheers.*] The dispute with reference to the first point dated back to 1885. At that time the late Lord Penrhyn was a very old man, and the quarries were in a state of financial difficulties—so serious, indeed, that in a short time they would have been closed. The late Lord Penrhyn gave the present owner of the quarries full power to do what he could to put things on a better footing. There existed at that time in the quarry a Committee which was styled the Quarry Committee. It had been allowed to come into existence and had obtained recognition from the management. It was recognised as a Committee appointed by the workmen to receive complaints, to consider them, and to see whether they constituted a proper case to be placed before the supreme manager for his decision. There were many complaints about the action of this Committee; for example, that complaints which were made were not forwarded to the authorities, that there was no provision under it for the representation of the non-unionist workers, and that, as the late chief manager averred, it interfered in many ways with the working of the quarries. The present Lord Penrhyn determined to do away with the Committee. [*Ironical cheers.*] He said, as he had said again recently in the Press, that he could not allow any body of men to interfere between him and his workers. From the date when the quarry was put on a new footing down to the time of the strike, things went on peacefully and smoothly, bringing increased prosperity to the quarries and district. Nothing more was wanted in proof of this than to point to the remarks of the hon. Member opposite, when he spoke of the manner in which the quarrymen had been able to found and endow various chapels and schools. In May of last year a number of the men wished to attend the May Day labour demonstration, and notice was given that the men should apply for leave in the ordinary manner. Some 300 men did apply; the remainder did not apply, but took leave. When they returned to work they were suspended for two days. [*Ironical cheers.*] Any employer of labour would understand that it was not unusual for such a course to be adopted, and, at any rate, it was the rule of the quarry. After the two days' suspension they returned to work. Shortly before August seven of the employés forwarded to Mr. Young, the chief manager, a written statement and requisition dealing with the wages standard of different classes of workmen, one point being that there should be a minimum wage of 4s. 6d. a day. The result of a minimum wage would simply be to put a premium upon idleness. [*Cheers.*] He might point out that the wages of the quarrymen for the six months prior to the strike represented an average daily pay of 5s. 6d. On August 17 Lord Penrhyn received the deputation of the men with reference to various grievances, and at the interview he read out a reply giving his reasons for not being able to grant their request. He also told them that if they had any desire to see him again they should write to Mr. Young, but down to the present time Lord Penrhyn had had no application from the workers. On August 20 the men formulated a detailed reply, going over the same ground. On September 25, after some weeks' further investigation, Lord Penrhyn forwarded a full rejoinder, and promised to put a stop to any abuses found to exist. On September 14 two workmen were summoned to the manager's office, but did not go, their explanation being that the Committee had told them not to. The men were suspended, and after an interval of 12 days, no further explanation having been made, they were discharged. The statement that they were discharged next day was incorrect. On September 26 a resolution was passed at the meeting of the council of the North Wales Quarrymen's Union, stating:—

> "That we, as the committee of Lord Penrhyn's quarries, after serious consideration of our position, in the face of Lord Penrhyn's unfavourable reply to our request and complaints, are of opinion that no good can result from continuing the negotiations on the same lines as hitherto, and we regard it as our duty to make it plain that we shall strike in March next unless, in the meantime, we find that the main points of our grievances have been conceded."

That meant that the men chose March next as the most convenient time for themselves, and therefore the most inconvenient time for the owners of the quarry, to announce a strike. This resolution was passed on September 26, and on September 28 notices were served on 31 men, comprising the committee and others, in the following words:—

> "I have to inform you that you are hereby suspended until further notice from the end of this quarry month."

[*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] On September 28 a general strike was declared by the workmen, and on September 30 the Quarrymen's Union organiser applied to the Board of Trade to intervene. With regard to Lord Penrhyn's action in declining the intervention of the Board of Trade, there were two or three points at issue in reference to this demand of the men. Lord Penrhyn stated on many occasions that he was always willing to receive any deputation from the men, but that he was not willing to assent to the conditions which the Board of Trade proposed. Two of the stipulations were of minor importance. The men desired to have their own interpreter and shorthand writer. [*Opposition cheers.*] Lord Penrhyn assented to this on the understanding that these men were taken from the ranks of the quarrymen. [*Opposition laughter and ironical cheers.*] An efficient interpreter might easily have been found among the quarrymen. In the statement sent to Members of the House it was stated that when Lord Penrhyn received the deputation the working manager acted as interpreter. That was not so. The interpreter on that occasion was a man drawn from the ranks of the quarrymen, David Davies, and his services were available on any other occasion. As to the statement that all the men of light and leading in the quarry were on the committee, it was disproved by the fact that Mr. William H. Williams, who had been described in the Welsh papers as "the quarrymen's Gladstone"—[*laughter*]—was not a member of the committee, and a great number of other able men were not connected with it. As to the shorthand writer, he admitted that it might have been difficult to find one among the quarrymen—[*Opposition cheers*]—but there had been no suggestion on the part of either the men or the Board of Trade officials that any independent, impartial, and official shorthand writer should be asked to attend. Lord Penrhyn felt strongly that the suggestion involved an unjust slur upon the shorthand writer and interpreter who had attended previous meetings. In the letter which the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade wrote on September 24, he repudiated the suggestion that the proposal of the Board of Trade contained any imputation that the men had suffered any disadvantage from Lord Penrhyn's interpreter and shorthand writer. But these difficulties were not too serious to have been overcome. [*Opposition ironical cheers.*] But Lord Penrhyn's main objection was extremely important. The men insisted that representatives of the Board of Trade should be present at the proposed conference, and the Board of Trade supported that view. [*Opposition cheers.*] The functions of these representatives and the authority they were to exercise had remained from the outset quite indefinite. The specific section of the Act to which the men referred contained no words for guidance in that matter. It made no reference to the presence of representatives of the Board of Trade at any conference between employers and employed. It simply authorised the appointment of a conciliator or board of conciliation.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS: It provides for the appointment of a Chairman.

Mr. DOUGLAS-PENNANT said that it had been asserted that Lord Penrhyn, in declining to avail himself of the Conciliation Act as interpreted by the Board of Trade, had flouted the Act and defied the Government. That accusation was unreasonable. The words of the Act must be taken to represent the opinions of the Government as to the limits to which it was expedient in practice or just in principle that the Board of Trade should interfere between employer and employed. Those words contained no shadow or suggestion of a compulsory principle—[*cheers*]—or that it was always the duty of either party to admit the application of the Act. Employers would always be apt to shrink from having recourse to this Act, because they were well aware that no arrangements which might be made between them and their workmen before a conciliation could be made binding on the men. [*Cheers.*] If the trade unions would consent, as recommended by the Labour Commission, to become legally liable for breach of contract, the matter might assume a different complexion. [*Cheers.*] But trade unions were apparently resolute in their opposition to these recommendations. Lord Penrhyn also thought that the presence of the Board of Trade officials would weaken his authority and that of his officials in the quarry, and form a precedent for the men asking for similar intervention on other occasions. [*Opposition cheers.*] Finally, the fact that in their letter of December 24 the Board intimated that Lord Penrhyn's letter had been forwarded to the organising secretary of the men, while the Board did not, until he had twice complained, forward to him the letters which had passed between the Department and the men—[*Ministerial cheers*]—did not encourage Lord Penrhyn to welcome the intervention of the Board of Trade.

*MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) said that no statement made by the men could illustrate the grievances under which they laboured better than the defence of Lord Penrhyn offered by the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman had admitted the men's whole case. He had complained that the House did not adapt its legislation to the whims and fancies of Lord Penrhyn, and had stated that if that had been done Lord Penrhyn would probably have condescended to be advised by the legislation of Parliament and to be influenced by the Board of Trade. The House of Commons had not yet become the slave of Lord Penrhyn.

MR. DOUGLAS-PENNANT: I beg to point out that I did not make any of those statements.

*MR. BROADHURST said that the hon. Member had complained of the terms of the Act of last year, as not containing a binding clause on the workmen with respect to any contract entered into on their behalf. [*Cries of* "No!"] What did that amount to but a demand that the House of Commons should adapt itself to the peculiar prejudices of Lord Penrhyn—[*cries of* "No!"]—and not consider what would be equitable between employer and employed? The hon. Gentleman had admitted also that the committee's statement of complaint to Lord Penrhyn had been revised and altered to suit the fancies of the agent who conveyed it. The crux of the whole question was whether the men had a right to combine and to make their case heard through the mouths of their chosen leaders. That was the old position for which Trades Unionism had contended 40 years ago. The whole forces of Trades Unionism had long been used to demand on behalf of the workers the right to submit their grievances and their representations to the employers through their chosen leaders, as the employers could communicate their wishes to the workmen through their managers and other paid agents. If that right was denied or objected to then the whole force of combination fell to the ground. Lord Penrhyn had been good enough to say that he did not object to combination, provided it took a form suitable to his own convenience and opinions. [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes, that was the fact. He wished hon. Gentlemen opposite would have a little patience. The leading advocate of the other side had been given a most patient hearing. They had encouraged the hon. Gentleman by their cheers when they thought he was travelling in the right direction, but to their consternation he soon harked back to the old cry that a man had a right to do as he pleased with his own, and they then ceased to cheer him. [*Laughter.*] Lord Penrhyn did not object to combination so long as it did not interfere with his right to do what he liked with his workmen, or his right to conduct his own works without any consideration to the feelings of the people whom he employed. But he sincerely trusted that before the Debate closed some Member representing property and capital would stand up and put a different face on this unhappy dispute than had been put on it by the hon. Member who had just sat down. The hon. Member opposite had raised the old question of combination. It looked indeed as if they would have to fight for the old right of combination over again if the policy of Lord Penrhyn was to be the policy of the majority of the employers of this country. But happily Lord Penrhyn was in a minority of one. There were very large employers in this country who welcomed the advent of trades unionism, and who were anxious to settle disputes through the chosen delegates of their workpeople rather than by dealing individually with their workmen. He would also point out that slate quarrying was a business of great skill. The arrangement of contracts involved great technical knowledge and patience, and he did not know any other industry in which it was more necessary for men of highly skilled knowledge and training, and men thoroughly acquainted with the English and the Welsh languages to represent labour in negotiations of the kind which had led to this unhappy dispute. The hon. Member opposite had admitted to the House that on last May Day the Penrhyn Quarry Management fined a number of their workmen two days' wages because they had the audacity to attend a labour demonstration. [*Cries of* "No!"]

Mr. DOUGLAS-PENNANT: I would like to point out to the hon. Gentleman that these men were suspended because they absented themselves without having first applied for leave.

*Mr. BROADHURST said that if the hon. Member had had patience and allowed him to finish his sentence he would have seen that that was precisely what he was going to wind up with. [*Laughter.*] The men were punished because they attended the May Day demonstration without the permission of the manager. What other employer was there in the kingdom that would look for a plea from his workpeople as to whether or not they should attend their annual function for trades union purposes? It was monstrous put on that ground. He had been present at that May Day demonstration, and he had attended many other labour demonstrations in North Wales, and there were thousands of quarrymen there whom he regarded as personal friends. He wished the whole House of Commons could have seen the proceedings on that remarkable day. It was a scene that would ever remain in his memory. [*Laughter.*] He begged hon. Members opposite, however frivolous they might be naturally, to give more serious thoughts to serious subjects. ["Hear, hear!"] He attended the conference in the morning, and he could say with truth that that conference had been conducted in a manner that would have done credit to the House of Commons, or to any other assembly in the world, and the religious tone and seriousness of the speeches, and the hymn-singing before and after the proceedings, made an impression on him which he would never forget. He took part in the procession in the afternoon, and later in the day he attended the public meeting, which again was opened and concluded by sacred songs of the most elevating and impressive character. He could not imagine why any man pretending to be included in the ranks of common Christianity should be excited to laughter when he heard that British workmen associated religious services with a demonstration intended to improve their social condition and to increase their means of obtaining their daily bread. He hoped that some responsible Minister or some responsible ex-Minister would come to the front in the sacred right of labour, in the sacred right of workers to have a voice in the terms which decided their wages. They had heard the manner in which some of the scanty wages of these workmen were used for educational and religious purposes in the Principality. He counted it amongst the most pleasing experiences of his life what he had witnessed in various parts of Wales, showing the religious fervour and the educational enthusiasm of the working classes of that country. He trusted that the result of the Debate would be to induce this great owner of the means of production to listen to reason, and not to use his mighty wealth and his great strength to crush out by starvation and tyranny the spirit of independence of the workpeople. Men had the right to some extent to do what they liked with their own, but it should be remembered that municipal law limited that right whenever it interfered with our neighbours, or tended to the spread of disease from house to house, in almost every town and village of the kingdom; and, if that were so, how much more was it necessary that there should be a limitation to rights which were used in a cruel and vindictive manner against a large community, as they had been used, many of them thought, in the case of the Penrhyn quarries. He trusted that the result of the discussion would be to lead to reason, common sense and justice prevailing between the two parties in this dispute. They had heard from the spokesman of the men that they were still willing, as they had been willing at the commencement of the dispute, to go into arbitration and to abide by the decision, not of a politician of the Radical school, or of a politician of the Conservative school, but to abide by the decision of a great permanent officer of the State who had no political purposes to serve, who was thoroughly unprejudiced and impartial, and who had already brought to a satisfactory conclusion many disputes during the last few years by the exercise of his influence, his good judgment, and his common sense. He might mention the case of the shoe trade of the kingdom, which was within an ace of being almost ruined. He had that day a letter from the gentleman who was then President of the Employers' Association, who said that he believed no outside interference could do good, that they should be better without it, and that after listening to the reasons of the permanent official of the Board of Trade he saw how reasonable it was to follow the suggestions made from that quarter. He also said that he had never ceased to be glad that he did on that occasion accept the proposals made, which had had a happy effect upon the whole of the trade. He had no doubt the workmen's officers would in the main agree with the employers' official. If the Board of Trade could deal with the boot trade it was equally capable of dealing with the slate trade. He hoped that it was not too late even now for something to be done—for 3,000 men, with their families, on the brink of starvation, was no light matter. He prayed the House to contemplate this difficult subject with all the seriousness which it should show on a great occasion of this kind, and that passions would not be allowed to take the place of reason. Let them join as one man in holding out the olive leaf of peace to the two contending parties in this dispute. [*Cheers.*]

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield) thought it very desirable that they should confine themselves to the only matter of the Debate. There appeared to be two main allegations against Lord Penrhyn. The first was that he had dismissed or suspended a large number of his men because they were legitimately combining amongst themselves; and the second was that he had put himself in the wrong by declining to accept the intervention of the Board of Trade, and refused to avail himself of the Conciliation Act of last year. If it could be shown that Lord Penrhyn had dismised these men for no other reason except that they were engaged in a legitimate combination in their own interests, the House could take no effective action in the matter, because he apprehended that Lord Penrhyn's personal feelings would not be very materially affected. If there were a complete justification for the men, every hon. Member could have his own judgment upon the matter. These men were dismissed for certain distinct and definite offences, the climax of which was that in December they threatened a strike, and he asked the House to say whether an employer was bound to keep in his employment men who had threatened to strike three or four months hence. It appeared, the hon. Member said, quoting from a statement circulated on behalf of Lord Penrhyn, that in August the men came with certain demands, which were refused. What those demands were was not very material, but they included a rise in wages to the extent of 37½ per cent., the present wage being 5s. 6d. a day, and included a demand for a minimum of 4s. 6d. a day. In refusing those demands Lord Penrhyn was only doing what other employers had done in similar cases. On December 26 the Committee of the men announced they would strike in March unless their demands were in the meantime granted, whereupon Lord Penrhyn suspended the Committee, and then a general strike was declared. If Lord Penrhyn had no objection to combination, why, hon. Members might ask, did he refuse to recognise the Committee? The fact was that combination in that part of the world meant more than it meant to our ears. ["Oh!"] There was a Committee prior to 1885, which was not merely a Committee for the men, but a Committee which practically assumed the management of the quarry. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Their idea of management was to run up wages to such an extent that in 1885 the entire earnings were not sufficient to meet the wages bill. [*Cheers.*] Lord Penrhyn abolished the Committee, which had never since been recognised, and reduced wages to the maximum paid in any other quarry in the district. Now there was an attempt to restore the Committee to its old influence. The men passed a resolution that they should not be called individually to the office, but that negotiations should be carried on under the supervision of the General Committee—that was to say, that Lord Penrhyn was to be deprived of his right as an employer to send for any one of his employés. Could any employer possibly agree to that? [*Ministerial cheers.*] This Committee had been writing very able letters to the papers, one of which covered over two columns of *The Times.*

It was a beautifully expressed letter, in which it was said that the Committee were simply working men, who, as they were unable to express themselves in English, had to rely on a translator. [*Laughter.*] He congratulated that translator on having done his work so admirably. The men complained that the quarry was not worked in the manner best calculated to benefit master or men. They meant to say that the management was bad, and would be a great deal better in their hands. ["No."] Mr. R. Davies, chairman of Committee, who went to Lord Penrhyn, made a speech in which he said his object was "to restore the King." It was obvious that the intention was to restore the Committee, not to represent the men in the interests of their labour, because a Committee in that sense had existed all these years. As representing the men Lord Penrhyn was ready to receive it now, but he would not recognise its authority to come between him and the management of his quarries. It was only natural Lord Penrhyn should take that course. He was upholding the right to manage his own property. He was entitled to do so in any case, but he was still further induced to do so by the almost fatal consequences which had ensued during that period when the management had passed into the hands of these men who were now seeking to resume it. He hoped the House would understand why Lord Penrhyn objected to the Committee, and that hon. Members would see that there could be no truth in the assertion that Lord Penrhyn dismissed these men for no other reason except that they were combining amongst themselves. As to the complaint regarding the shorthand writer, all Lord Penrhyn wanted was that any report which was sent out in connection with so delicate and difficult a matter as the preliminary negotiations with respect to conciliation, should be an accurate report. He naturally did not put much faith in that class of local journalists who for weeks and weeks past had been misrepresenting the facts of the dispute. If the men had suggested to Lord Penrhyn the name of an impartial reporter he would not have objected to his presence.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why did he not suggest it?

Mr. Bromley Davenport.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The suggestion did not come from him, but from the men. What the men said was, "We want to bring our own reporter." He would now turn to another point. He had heard it stated that the sweating system largely prevailed in this quarry. A man sent up a long letter to the Board of Trade in support of this allegation. This individual stated that he was engaged casually, and for one day's job at road clearing at 4½d. per ton, under a contractor, not under Lord Penrhyn. He was able to clear five loads a day, which would be about 3s. 9d. That was not a very high wage, but at any rate it was not his own idea of sweating. The writer's description of sweating was this: "I succeeded in loading five loads a day and that by sweating extremely." [*Loud laughter.*]

MR. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough) asked, amidst interruption, whether the hon. Member was clear in his calculation.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said a load was two tons. If the hon. Member would go into the matter he would find the statement was correct. It was not a high wage, 3s. 9d. a day, but it was a fair wage, and though the contractor might do well at those terms it seemed a bad bargain for Lord Penrhyn. He denied that Lord Penrhyn had declined to avail himself of the Conciliation Act. The Act provided that on the application of either party to a dispute the Board of Trade might, if satisfied on certain points, appoint a person or persons to act as a conciliator or as a board of conciliation. No such suggestion was made to Lord Penrhyn. The suggestion was that one or more representatives of the Board of Trade should be present at a proposed interview between himself and his employees. There was no provision in the Act for this. [*Cheers.*] Sir Courtenay Boyle in one of his letters presumed—the expression was not too strong—to say that that was the intention of the Act. It was, indeed, a new and dangerous doctrine that one of the administrative departments through one of its permanent officials should be allowed to do what even the Courts of Law could not do—read into an Act of Parliament words which were not there. [*Cheers.*] Lord Penrhyn declined to be bound by this assertion of a Government official, and he believed the House would say he was right. So far as the Conciliation Act was concerned Lord Penrhyn was in the right and the Board of Trade was in the wrong. Some explanation on the point was due from the Board of Trade. [*Cheers.*] But Lord Penrhyn did not take his stand merely on the letter of the law. Even if the Board of Trade had confined itself within the limits of the Act, Lord Penrhyn would probably have declined to be bound by the decision of a tribunal which had apparently already made up its mind against him. ["Oh, oh!"] Two incidents would prove his case. There was a lot of correspondence between Lord Penrhyn and the men and the Board of Trade. The Board published the correspondence between Lord Penrhyn and themselves, but withheld the correspondence between the Board and the men. Lord Penrhyn asked for the correspondence, but Sir Courtenay Boyle wrote:—

> "I am not aware of any communication from the men the substance of which has not been known to your lordship, but if you desire to have the text of any letter and will specify which letter you have in your mind, I will cause a copy to be supplied to you at once."

Was there ever anything so monstrously unfair? [*Cheers.*] Lord Penrhyn was asked to select from a bundle of correspondence he had never seen—[*cheers and laughter*]—a letter of the contents of which he was totally ignorant. Not being a conjuror or a thought-reader Lord Penrhyn declined to avail himself of the offer. The House would agree that the sources from which the Board of Trade derived information on which it might have to found its judgment, ought to be without taint or suspicion of prejudice or partiality. ["Hear, hear!"] The Board derived its information from officers called labour correspondents. The correspondent for the district of North Wales in which Lord Penrhyn's quarries were situated was Mr. George Rowley. Happily he was relieved from the necessity of giving the House his own views of Mr. Rowley's suitability for the office he held, and the impartiality with which he discharged his functions, because he had put on record his own views of his qualifications for the post. Mr. Rowley was lately attacked in a local newspaper on the ground that he could not speak Welsh. This gentleman wrote to assert his qualifications for the post he held. He said:—

> "I received my appointment through the recommendation of several Welsh Members, well-known Radicals."

[*Loud cheers and laughter.*] He further stated that he had been a trade unionist all his life to which, of course, there was no objection, and continued:—

> "I have taken a leading part for more than 20 years in, and have had a large experience of, strikes of all kinds, and have on many occasions presided over meetings conducted wholly in Welsh. Only the other day I was chairman at a Welsh meeting at—"

he declined to attempt to pronounce the name—

> "for the purpose of raising subscriptions on behalf of the Bethesda men."

This was the man who was conveying the information to the Board of Trade —[*cheers*]—which was to enable them to hold the scales of justice evenly between the two parties to this dispute. Surely it was not Lord Penrhyn who owed an explanation to the House, but the Board of Trade. He frankly admitted that he had been induced to take part in this Debate by considerations of a personal character. A life-long friendship which he had inherited had given him countless opportunities of learning the true character of the man who had been assailed with so much rancour. For weeks past Lord Penrhyn had been the subject of criticisms of a severe kind at the hands of those who could only have heard one side of the case. The Leader of the Opposition in the course of his speech on the Address expressed his deep regret and condemnation of the course Lord Penrhyn had taken in refusing to act under the provisions of the Conciliation Act. [*Opposition cheers.*] He had failed indeed, if he had not made it plain that Lord Penrhyn had never been invited to act under that Act—[*cheers*]—and he could not avoid, in the House of Commons, expressing his deep regret that the right hon. Gentleman was not more careful that a statement so calculated to prejudice public opinion before the facts were known, should at least be accurate, however ill judged. [*Cheers.*] All over the country for weeks and weeks past there had been speeches, newspaper paragraphs, leading articles, and even sermons, denouncing Lord Penrhyn. Only last Sunday, he believed, the same hon. Members opposite were deriving fresh ideas and inspiration for their speeches from the eloquence of certain reverend gentlemen, one of whom, he understood, preached from the text, "And Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go." [*Loud laughter.*] The preacher forgot that the people in this case went of their own accord. [*Laughter.*] While the House would appreciate the humour of it, they would also appreciate its injustice. Lord Penrhyn was no hard-hearted Pharaoh, but an upright, honourable, fair-minded English gentleman, and wholly incapable of any mean, paltry, or dishonourable action. [*Cheers.*] Suggestions had been made that he was a hard, ungenerous, and unjust employer; but the total refutation of that was to be obtained from the men themselves, who said they had had good wages and comfortable homes. They were undoubtedly a splendid body of men, but they earned splendid wages. [*Some cries of* "No."] That was proved by the fact that they were able to spend £1,000 in a cricket ground, to build 20 chapels, and to give £1,500 to the University of Bangor. It was very creditable to them to have done this, but they could not come to the House and complain of sweating wages. After this strike 400 men remained at work, and Lord Penrhyn kept them on for thirteen weeks, though nothing was coming out of the quarry, and when at last he had to dismiss them, he gave every one of them over the age of 65 a pension for life of £1 a month, and to everyone under that age £1 to assist him in obtaining work elsewhere. It was fair that the House should know these facts. If in the remarks he had made he had given offence to any section of the House, he apologised, but he made no apology for having resented, even with some warmth, an attack which he felt to be unjustifiable on an honourable and upright gentleman, and a personal friend.

*The PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon) said he associated himself with every word his hon. Friend had said with regard to the personal character of Lord Penrhyn. He had not the honour of his personal acquaintance, but he had sufficient acquaintance with him to enable him to speak upon it. He knew from what he had heard from all quarters, and even from those who unfortunately were in opposition to him at the present moment, that the character of Lord Penrhyn was as had been described by his hon. Friend; and although he regretted the position he had taken up on this question, he hoped that no one word would fall from him that would give personal offence to him. The hon. Gentleman who made this Motion made it in a very clear and moderate speech—[*Opposition cheers*]—and he might also say the same for his hon. Friend the Member for South Northampton, who he thought performed a task of a difficult character in a way which won for him the admiration of all Members of the House. He wished that these examples of moderation had been followed by some of the subsequent speakers on both sides of the House—[*cries of* "Oh!" *on the Ministerial side below the gangway*]—because he was sure that what they all had at heart was to endeavour in some way or other to bring this unhappy dispute to an amicable arrangement; and it was not quite the right way of doing that to use very strong language on one side or the other. He wanted the House first of all to consider what was exactly the position of the Board of Trade with regard to questions of conciliation and the duties imposed on them by the Conciliation Act. The Board of Trade, as had been already alluded to, had for many years past endeavoured to perform when requested the part of conciliator, and had done so with remarkable success in many difficult disputes, involving many intricate and difficult questions. But they did so without any statutory authority until the Act of last year was passed. That Act was passed because it was felt on all hands that the most unreasonable way of endeavouring to settle disputes was by trying to see which side could last out the longest. It was felt, and felt rightly, that disputes which involved the employment of a large number of people, which involved, it might be, the very existence of an industry, which might be of great importance to the country, was not merely a private question—[*cheers*]—and that the utmost efforts possible should be made by the authority of an Act of Parliament to endeavour to do something which should bring these disputes to an end. Thus the House of Commons had recognised that this was a matter of great public concern, and they had accordingly placed upon the shoulders of the Board of Trade a large and heavy responsibility with regard to it. He was glad to think that since the passing of this Act many disputes—some of them of great importance—had been dealt with by the Board of Trade, and happily settled. [" Hear, hear! "] He need scarcely allude to the well-known case of the London and North Western Railway Company, in which on the one side the directors and on the other side the men had shown the greatest willingness to listen to the representations made to them by himself, and in which ultimately a settlement was arrived at for which he had received the thanks of both parties. [" Hear, hear!"] It was also only the other day—indeed it was within the last week—that the Board of Trade had received an application from a large coal-mine owner at whose mine, where 1,200 men were employed, a strike had occurred that the Department should put into action the stipulations and provisions of the Conciliation Act. The application, it should be observed, came not from the men who had struck, but from the owner who had been struck against. That was a proof that the Act was not regarded only by those who struck but was equally regarded by those who were struck against as being of value to them. [" Hear, hear! "] He might say that the utmost disposition had been shown by both parties to the dispute to take advantage of the provisions of the Act. [" Hear, hear!"] And how had these settlements been brought about? Not by the fussy or official interference of the Board of Trade, but by bringing the parties together. The principal object of the Board of Trade in all cases had always been not to put their statutory powers as conciliators into force, but to get those concerned to settle their disputes among themselves. ["Hear, hear!"] They believed that if they could get the parties to a dispute round a table it would be found that there was really no very great difference between them, and that the difficulties in the way of a settlement disappeared. The hon. Member for the Macclesfield Division of Cheshire had used some very strong language with regard to the action of the Board of Trade in connection with Lord Penrhyn and his employés; indeed he had actually implied a want of good faith on the part of the Department. [*Cheers and counter-cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman had referred to certain letters which had passed between the Department and Lord Penrhyn. He took upon himself the whole responsibility for the Board of Trade's share in that correspondence. [*Cheers.*] Every one of those letters was written under his own personal supervision, and he took upon himself the responsibility for every statement that was made in them. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman said that Sir Courtenay Boyle had been directed to read into the Act words which it did not contain. That was a view that he did not agree with. Sir Courtenay Boyle in his letter of December 24 said—

> "The remark in my previous letter with regard to another disadvantage under which the men would labour by having to come to you without any of their chosen leaders had reference to the condition you imposed that all the members of the committee originally chosen were to be excluded from selection by the men in appointing the deputation that was to wait upon you. To this condition, however disadvantageous as it undoubtedly was to the men, they very reluctantly consented, but they urged very strongly that a representative of the Board of Trade should be present at the interview, believing that the adoption of this course would greatly facilitate the opening up of negotiations. In this view the Board of Trade concur, and they cannot but think that your categorical refusal to comply with this request was neither in harmony with the intention of the Conciliation Act nor promising for the success of the negotiations."

He did not intend to trouble the House by reading Section 2 of the Conciliation Act. What was intended by that section any one could judge for himself; it was that the Board of Trade should endeavour to bring about settlement of disputes between employers and employed.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): Read the section.

MR. RITCHIE said that the section was in these words—

"Where a difference exists or is apprehended between an employer or any class of employers and workmen, or between different classes of workmen, the Board of Trade may, if they think fit, exercise all or any of the following powers, namely:—(*a*) Inquire into the causes and circumstances of the difference; (*b*) take such steps as to the Board may seem expedient for the purpose of enabling the parties to the difference to meet together by themselves or their representatives, under the presidency of a chairman mutually agreed upon or nominated by the Board of Trade or by some other person or body, with a view to the amicable settlement of the difference."

["Hear, hear!"] Did not that justify the view that Lord Penrhyn's refusal to allow the Board of Trade to take steps for the settlement of the dispute between him and his men was contrary to the intention of the Act? [*Cheers.*]

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he contended that that section of the Act gave power to the Board of Trade to suggest that they should send their representative down to the scene of the dispute.

*MR. RITCHIE said that not only the phraseology of the section, but the whole intention of the Act was in that direction. ["Hear, hear!"] The intention of the section was that the Board of Trade might take such steps as they deemed necessary to bring about a settlement of the dispute between the parties —["hear, hear!"]—and if the Board of Trade thought that the only way to bring about a meeting between the parties was by their sending a representative, it was clearly their duty to do so. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member further stated that it was quite evident from the course of the correspondence that the Board of Trade had made up their minds on the merits of the dispute. To that allegation he gave a most absolute and unqualified denial, and he might say that there was not a shade of foundation for it. [*Cheers.*] He and his advisers had been most careful not in any way to enter into the real merits of the dispute; with that he had always said he had nothing to do, and Lord Penrhyn knew that he had always stated that in his correspondence with him. He was satisfied that Lord Penrhyn had never authorised the hon. Member to put forward any such contention. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman had spoken about some man, whose name he had never heard to his knowledge, as being a local labour correspondent of the Board of Trade, and from whom they had obtained their information in regard to this case. That certainly was not the case. ["Hear, hear!"] So anxious had he been that the Department should receive the information necessary—not upon the merits of the case—that, in addition to the correspondence, he had asked his noble Friend Lord Dudley to go down and see Lord Penrhyn and endeavour, by his personal influence, to obtain that information, and he also sent down one of the most trusted officials of the Board of Trade to see the men with the view of persuading them to give up some of the points which they were insisting upon. Therefore the information received by the Board of Trade was not obtained in any shape from the person to whom the hon. Member referred. ["Hear, hear!"] The man might be a labour correspondent of the Board of Trade for all he knew, and in that case doubtless it would have been his duty to furnish such information as he could. There was a large number of these local labour correspondents, and perhaps the man referred to might be one. [*Ironical cheers.*] Did hon. Members who objected to these local labour correspondents place any reliance on the Labour Department of the Board of Trade? Did they think it useful or useless? If they thought it useful they must have as their labour correspondents men who could advise them as regarded the circumstances of these cases. He did not know of the individual referred to, but he could say that his information in regard to this case was obtained from other sources. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Gentleman had also said that Lord Penrhyn had never been asked to consent to the appointment of a conciliator to act under the Conciliation Act. That was true, because he regarded the appointment of a conciliator as a more advanced step. Did he understand the hon. Gentleman to say that Lord Penrhyn would have consented to the appointment of a conciliator if he had been asked to do so?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that under no circumstances would Lord Penrhyn have consented.

*MR. RITCHIE said that in that case he did not think that the hon. Member was entitled to find fault because the Board of Trade had not asked Lord Penrhyn to adopt a course to which he so strongly objected. ["Hear, hear!"] As he had already said, he regarded the appointment of a conciliator as a more advanced step. He had always considered that the most friendly and best way of bringing about an agreement was to get the two parties to the dispute together, and the hon. Member must admit that he had endeavoured to bring the two parties together. The hon. Gentleman had laid great stress upon the fact that the whole of the correspondence was not sent to Lord Penrhyn, whilst it was sent to the men. But the men had to make up their minds whether or not they would accept Lord Penrhyn's proposals, and therefore it was necessary that the whole of the correspondence should be sent to them. That part of the correspondence which was not sent to Lord Penrhyn was of a purely formal character. Lord Penrhyn was acquainted with every material fact in this correspondence. He himself had sent to Lord Penrhyn the material letter in the correspondence. [MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: What date?] He sent it to Lord Penrhyn on October 2. [*Opposition cheers.*]

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: This is not the correspondence referred to.

*MR. RITCHIE: I beg pardon, it is the correspondence. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not believe that Lord Penrhyn would for a moment contend that there was any portion of the letters of the least importance which was not forwarded to him. They had not concealed from him a single thing that he ought to have known; he was certain of that. ["Hear, hear!"] He could only say with regard to much of the discussion that had taken place that day that they had steadily avoided going into the merits of the case, and he did not now propose to go into them. ["Hear, hear!"] Their object was to attain peace. His hon. Friend said that there were three conditions laid down—two of them of minor importance and one of them of considerable importance. The two of minor importance he had said might have been overcome, but not the important one. The two minor points were the shorthand writer and the interpreter, and the one of importance was the presence of a representative of the Board of Trade. It was curious that in letter No. 13 of the correspondence there were these words—that with regard to the presence of a Board of Trade representative, he stated, there was no desire to press the matter against Lord Penrhyn's wishes. So that this point was waived before the negotiations were brought to a conclusion.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: It was revived.

*MR. RITCHIE: After the negotiations had practically terminated the suggestion was renewed; but prior to that Lord Penhryn was informed that the presence of a Board of Trade representative would not be pressed against his wishes. That was the one condition of importance, and it was withdrawn before the negotiations came to a close. ["Hear, hear!"] Then there remained the shorthand writer and the interpreter. He was told that it would have been impossible to have obtained in the quarry a man sufficiently acquainted with Welsh and English who would have made a good interpreter, and as to the shorthand writer my hon. Friend said that no suggestion came from the Board of Trade on the subject. On reference to No. 20 it would be found to this effect:—

> "I am directed to ask whether you still adhere to the objection to a representative of the Board of Trade attending at the first meeting, and whether you consent to the men bringing an interpreter and a shorthand writer whose names should be first submitted to you for your approval."

[*Opposition cheers.*] He authorised that letter to be written without consultation with the men. [MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: "Hear, hear!"] He did not quite understand that "hear, hear!" It was they who had reason to complain if he had exceeded his powers in this respect. No notice was taken of that suggestion. As far as the Board of Trade was concerned there was no wish to press a shorthand writer not approved of by

Lord Penrhyn. He hoped that they would have no prolonged discussion on the subject. He most earnestly desired that the negotiations broken off might be resumed. They were willing to meet, as far as possible, every suggestion which Lord Penrhyn might make in order to get the parties together to discover reasons for ending the conflict. He hoped he had shown that that was the sole desire of the Board of Trade. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): We have witnessed this afternoon a remarkable and, I can only call it, a very painful scene. I have heard of Ministers being attacked, sometimes perhaps unjustly, by a violent Opposition, but a more vehement and, I think, a more unjust attack made on a responsible Minister of the Crown by one of his avowed supporters and cheered to the echo by hon. Gentlemen opposite I never heard of. [*Laughter and Opposition cheers.*] It seems to me the inveterate practice of this overwhelming majority is to occupy themselves night after night with attack after attack upon their chosen representatives. [*Laughter.*] I must say the practice saves the minority the task of criticising the action of the Government; and I must add that if the hon. Member for Macclesfield desires to bring this quarrel to an end a more unsuccessful advocate I have never listened to; for, if this matter is to be approached in the spirit in which he has approached it, there will not and there cannot be peace in that district. [*Cheers.*] What is the language what we have heard from him in this matter? First of all it was a denunciation of the action of the Board of Trade in carrying out the Conciliation Act. There can be nothing more clear on the face of the Act than that the action of the Board of Trade in this matter was exactly the thing which the statute laid down. [*Cheers.*] Listen to what the Act says. It contemplates a difference between an employer and his workmen. In such case the Board of Trade may—

> (1.) "Inquire into the causes and circumstances of the difference.
>
> (2.) "Take such steps as to the Board may seem expedient for the purpose of enabling the parties to meet together of themselves or their representatives.
>
> (3.) "On the application of either party appoint a person to act as conciliator."

All this may be done on the application of one of the parties; it is only when it comes to a final arbitration that the consent of both sides is required. It is the duty of the Board of Trade to exercise the first three powers upon the application of either of the parties. Lord Penrhyn had undertaken to say that this is a private matter, in which the Board of Trade had no right to interfere and no right to inquire into the circumstances. The Board of Trade can take such steps as may seem expedient on the application of one of the parties for the purpose of enabling the parties to the difference to meet together. How are they to do that? The interference of the Board of Trade is resented by Lord Penrhyn. What was the Board of Trade to do except to apply to Lord Penrhyn and suggest to him how to carry the Act out? Thereupon Lord Penrhyn says: "This is a private affair; you have no business to interfere between me and my workmen." According to the Act the parties might meet under a chairman mutually agreed upon or nominated by the Board of Trade. It is clear, therefore, that the Board of Trade is entitled to nominate a chairman. It is entirely in accordance with the spirit of the Act as well as of the letter that the Board of Trade should send a representative. ["No!"] The words are perfectly clear. ["Hear, hear!"] Can anybody say that the course of the Board of Trade, in suggesting to Lord Penrhyn that a representative of the Board of Trade should be present in order to assist in settling the differences, did not come within the letter and spirit of that Act? I venture to say that the Board of Trade were justified in doing—and, indeed, were called upon to do—what they did. What the right hon. Gentleman has said is perfectly true. The Board of Trade might, if they had chosen to do so, on the application of the employers or workmen, and after taking into consideration the existence and adequacy of the means available for conciliation, have appointed a person or persons to act as a conciliator or as a board of conciliation. Now, what becomes of the hon. Member for Macclesfield's venomous attack upon Sir Courtenay Boyle for presuming to say on behalf of the Board of Trade what he did? It is a mean and unworthy course, and one which is always condemned, and I hope always will be condemned in this House, to attack one of the permanent officials in a department of the Government for which there is a responsible Minister in this House. [*Cheers.*] No Minister who respects himself or respects the House of Commons will do otherwise than repudiate such unworthy attacks as those made by the hon. Member upon Sir Courtenay Boyle. ["Hear, hear!"] Sir Courtenay Boyle did in this matter what he ought to have done, and he did what his chief has taken—and very properly taken—the responsibility for. I deplore and condemn the conduct of Lord Penrhyn in refusing to accept the good offices of the Board of Trade under the Conciliation Act for the purpose of settling this unfortunate dispute. Hon. Gentlemen opposite are very pleased to go about the country boasting of the social legislation which they have passed. Here is a fine specimen of their social legislation! [*Opposition cheers.*] It has led to that sort of language which I can only call a declaration of warfare between employers and employed—["No, no"]—which has characterised the whole course of this dispute, and it is setting at naught your own Act of which you boast before the constituencies—an Act which I am bound to say has done great good in this country. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; great good, because it had been fairly and honourably dealt with by employers of labour, Lord Penrhyn being, as far I know, the sole and unfortunate exception. Suppose, when one of the most disastrous strikes that could threaten the industry of this country was impending between the London and North-Western Railway Company, the company had chosen to hold the language of the old Duke of Newcastle before the Reform Bill—"Cannot I do what I like with my own?" That was the motto Lord Penrhyn has chosen to adopt. Suppose the London and North-Western Railway Company had chosen to say: "Oh, questions between us and our employés are private matters; what business has the Board of Trade to say a word in the matter? Why in the world are we not to do as we like with our own?" On the contrary, they sought the good offices of the Board of Trade, and the matter was satisfactorily settled. Lord Penrhyn would have nothing to do with the Board of Trade; he would have nobody but his own interpreter and his own shorthand writers, and he would take no step whatever that might put an end to the strife. There is another point, and in my opinion a more important and far more wide-reaching question, and that is the war Lord Penrhyn has declared against the principle of labour combination. Was there ever such an idle pretence as to say: "I am in favour of combination, but I will refuse to admit of any of the methods by which alone combination can be given effect to"? How can a combination of men be carried out except through a committee or a body corresponding to a committee? We have been told that these are the private rights of property of Lord Penrhyn. Yes, there are private rights of property; but these men have quite as great private rights as Lord Penrhyn. The men have private rights in their own labour, and when there is a question of wages or contract they have just as much right to defend those private rights as Lord Penrhyn has to defend his. ["Hear, hear!"] How are they to defend their rights? Are they not to choose their own agents just as Lord Penrhyn chooses his? Lord Penrhyn has no right to question who shall be the agents of these men, any more than they have a right to challenge the agent Lord Penrhyn thinks fit to employ. If his example is followed by employers of labour you will have nothing but endless strikes, you will have no peace between capital and labour. [*Cheers.*] It is because employers of labour have for many a long year recognised that in these combinations, and in the agencies which these combinations employ, they have the best means of reconciling the interest of capital with that of labour, that they have always desired there should be representatives of these great bodies of workmen. Lord Penrhyn has endeavoured to deal individually with the men, and his men, I hope, never will allow themselves to be individually treated with. ["Hear, hear!"] Whatever his representatives may say, he has declared war upon the rights of combination. What business has he to attack the 71 men who were chosen by some thousands of these quarrymen?

An hon. Friend behind me gave a very good illustration—namely, that from the moment these men became the agents of the whole of the quarrymen they were invested, as it were, with a sort of right which belongs to an ambassador, and Lord Penrhyn had no right to attack the men and suspend them. I deeply regret that Lord Penrhyn, against whom personally I desire to say nothing —[*a laugh*]—I have said nothing against Lord Penrhyn personally. I have said he has totally misapprehended the intention and the character of the Conciliation Act, and, in my opinion, he has entirely misapprehended the whole character of these combinations of labour. ["Hear, hear!"] Now the question we have to discuss to-day is whether you desire, as Parliament appeared to desire last Session, that the Board of Trade should be a beneficent instrument in bringing these contests between capital and labour to end by offering its good offices in order to ascertain the rights of the matters and to remove the differences between the parties. You made an attempt. That attempt promised great success. Experience has shown that the intervention of the Board of Trade has been generally useful. I do not understand the denunciation of the labour correspondent. Everybody knows that the office of a labour correspondent is not at all to direct or to influence the policy of the Board of Trade. Labour correspondents simply send up particulars as to wages and employment, the number of unemployed, and so forth—mere statistical information—and therefore all the appeals to prejudice made by the hon. Member for Macclesfield only tend to embitter the controversy, which is bitter enough without them. You have in the Board of Trade a very useful instrument of conciliation. Are you going to destroy it by encouraging the line Lord Penrhyn has taken? If you are, then tear up your Conciliation Act —it is not worth the paper it is printed on—and admit your social reforms are worthless, as indeed they are if the conduct of Lord Penrhyn is to prevail. Let us come to a clear understanding on the subject of combination. Are you going to make war on the trade unions? If you take up the line that an employer of labour is entitled to say: "This is my private affair, and you have no business in it, and I won't deal with any of my employés who go into combinations, and who choose their own representatives," we know exactly where we are. Shortly after I came into Parliament, as the hon. Member for Leicester knows very well, we fought out this battle in the seventies. We then passed these Acts, which gave recognition to the trade unions of the country, and are you prepared now to overthrow that legislation, and to support Lord Penrhyn in a view on the subject of combination which would defeat the whole principle of those Acts? I venture to say that this is a much larger question than that involved in the conduct of the Board of Trade. I hope, at all events, that in spite of the animated and vehement language of the hon. Member for Macclesfield, inspired, doubtless, by those sentiments of personal regard which everybody must respect, we have a higher duty than the consideration of the character of particular individuals or the sentiments of personal regard. ["Hear, hear!"] We have to deal with one of the gravest questions which affect the prosperity of this country. We know what injury has already been done by strikes to the trade of this country, and are you going to-night to encourage a course which must make strikes much more general and prolonged? Are you going to condemn the Board of Trade for interposing to prevent, if possible, the evils of strikes? [*Cheers.*] Are you going to declare principles making war upon that other method of conciliation by which it is competent for trade unions to appoint representative men to deal with their employers? If so, you are preparing for yourselves a very evil future—["Hear, hear!"]—if so, you will be laying the foundations of perpetual strife, which will undermine the prosperity and commerce of this country. Therefore, I hope that even at this moment wiser counsels may prevail, and that Lord Penrhyn will accede to the just and friendly interposition of the Board of Trade, and that he will deal in this matter with the men whom his employés regard as their representatives and friends. Except by so dealing with them I fear that it will be impossible that

Lord Penrhyn can ever come to a fair understanding with the men who served him before, and I have no doubt would serve him again. [*Cheers.*]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I cannot imagine to whom the solemn sermon contained in the closing sentences of the right hon. Gentleman's speech are really addressed. [*Laughter.*] Looking across the floor of the House the right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "Are you going to sanction this or that? Are you going to lay down that workmen are not to be permitted to combine? Are you going to support this or that new principle?"

And turning to the Member for Leicester the right hon. Gentleman appealed to their common experience, observing,

> "Don't you remember the noble fight we fought 25 years ago for the purpose of enabling the British workmen to combine?"

[*Laughter.*] So far as I can carry in my own mind the history of legislation on this subject, almost all the principal Acts giving liberty to workmen to combine were Tory Acts—[*cheers*]—and were part of that programme of social legislation against which the right hon. Gentleman sneers, but which I do not think he will find it very expedient to denounce on public platforms. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman asks whether the Government are going to destroy their own Conciliation Act of last year—a most pertinent question, and one which I confess has been occurring to me more than once during the course of this Debate. It is principally, indeed solely, for the purpose of begging the House not to destroy the Act by hasty and, if I may say so without offence, intemperate Debate that I have risen. [*Cheers.*] I make no complaint whatever against the fact that my right hon. Friend below the gangway and others have thought themselves bound to criticise the proceedings of the Board of Trade. ["Hear, hear!"] We ask for no immunity from criticism from either side of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] So long as criticism is directed to our administrative errors—if administrative errors they be—I should be the last person to complain of it. On this part of the Debate, however, I am bound to say that it seems to me that my right hon. Friend has ably and successfully defended the action of his Department—[*cheers*]—and the action of his subordinates, and nothing further is required from his colleagues in defence either of the head of the Department or of any members of it. ["Hear, hear!"] But there is a much larger question involved in this discussion, and I ask the House in all seriousness whether they think it possible that any Conciliation Act is going to work in this country if you take the matter out of the hands of the Department on the one side, and out of the hands of the workmen and employers on the other, and make it the subject of acrimonious controversy in the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*] The thing is absolutely impossible. This House has many great qualifications and many great gifts, but the qualification of being an impartial judge is one which it does not and never can possess, and it would be disastrous to the public interests if it should lay any claim to it. ["Hear, hear!"] I agree with the able speech of the opener of the Debate, a speech which was couched in very moderate language. I believe the hon. Member did his best not to embitter the dispute—["Hear, hear!"]—but his example has not, I think, been followed by every one who has spoken. In the nature of things it is impossible, perhaps, that the hon. Member's example should be followed by all. Once throw down on the floor of the House as a matter for discussion questions between representatives of different classes or sections in the House—questions in which personal discretion, conduct, and character were involved—and you will inevitably find that bitterness is imported, that accusations are made against people who cannot defend themselves which must rankle and leave behind them consequences very injurious to all the interests concerned, and which can be productive of nothing but evil to every person involved in the dispute. What would be thought if a similar course were taken when any body of gentlemen in this House thought not that the employer is in error, but that the trade union leaders involved in a dispute are in error owing to their action? Supposing the trade union leaders, by their faults, either of knowledge or of temper, involved a great industry in ruin and inflicted great injuries on a vast body of workmen, what would be thought if their case was vehemently discussed on the floor of the House of Commons, and a strong personal attack made on their discretion? [*Cheers.*] I know what I should think in such circumstances. I should think it a most deplorable and unfortunate course. I should say that this was not the way to induce men to agree among themselves; and if that is not the way to act when we are dealing with the leaders of labour, so also it is not the way to act when we are dealing with those who are employers of labour. ["Hear, hear!"] We are all alike fallible, all alike liable to error, all alike may permit personal feeling to intervene between the dry light of discretion or reason, and these inevitable failings to which we are all liable are aggravated, not appeased, by such Debates as we have had to-night. ["Hear, hear!"] For my part I cannot help thinking that, if, whenever the Board of Trade happens to fail, either with the employer or a body of workmen, in carrying out the beneficent work which was initiated by Parliament last year, the merits of the question are to be discussed on the floor of the House of Commons, accompanied by the invective and bitterness which must attach to such questions, then social legislation, at which the right hon. Gentleman has sneered in so far as it is embodied in the Act of last year, is foredoomed to disastrous failure. ["Hear, hear!"] This much, I think, is generally acknowledged, that the body of workmen engaged in the quarries of Lord Penrhyn are most admirable specimens of the working men of this country—[*cheers*]—and, on the other hand, I think that it will be admitted that Lord Penrhyn, both as a man and as an employer, is honourable, and, indeed, not only honourable, but generous. ["Hear, hear!"] The part of my hon. Friend's speech in which he dealt with the motives which led him to bring the matter forward with so much ability—[*cheers*]—and the way in which he dealt with the character and conduct of a personal friend must have found an echo in the hearts of everyone who listened to him. ["Hear, hear!"] Whatever we may think of this dispute—and if I had an opinion I would not express it—["Hear, hear!"]—it is, at all events, abundantly clear that in Lord Penrhyn we are dealing with one of those employers of labour who have shown themselves not merely honourable, but generous towards their workmen, and who have done very much for the great body of workmen, with whom, after all, their own interests are so intimately and closely associated. [*Cheers.*] Surely we ought to do something to earn the blessings that have been pronounced upon peacemakers. Some speeches, and notably that to which we have just listened, are not likely to earn us anything of that kind. [*Laughter and cheers.*] I hope, now that the Debate has gone on for upwards of three hours, it will be felt on all sides of the House that no further public advantage, that no further benefit to the men lately engaged in this great industry, that no further advantage either to capital or labour, can possibly accrue from prolonging a Debate which has gone on, in my judgment, too long already, and that we may hasten to bring this Debate to a conclusion and hesitate, and hesitate once again, before we think it necessary to bring into the arena of public Debates in the House of Commons matters with which the House of Commons is but little qualified to deal, and on which, if it does persist, as it has a right to persist, in dealing with, I am afraid it is likely to do more harm, in the long run, than good. My right hon. Friend has shown, both by his speech to-night and by his conduct, that his earnest desire and the object of the efforts of the Department over which he presides are directed towards healing those unhappy differences. [*Cheers.*] Let us not mar the good work in which he is engaged; let us wish him good speed in all his efforts, and let us not intervene in a manner, apparently in his support, but really in a way which must hamper all he is doing by attacks and criticisms upon persons who are not, and who cannot be, here to defend themselves, but with regard to whom passionate controversy had been aroused in the country which cannot but find a reflection in our Debates if we permit ourselves to debate them. I need say no more upon the substance of the Debate we have been engaged in. With regard to the technical point of view of the division, I hope we may be spared it. ["Hear, hear!"] It is evident that the division can only be as to whether the House adjourns or does not adjourn, and whereas there are cases in which even that apparently unmeaning Motion may be interpreted into a verdict of the House on one side or the other of a question it cannot be so interpreted on the present occasion, because evidently all those who desire to support the Board of Trade, all those who desire to support Lord Penrhyn, all, whatever interest they may take in the controversy, are bound really to vote for the Government on this occasion. [*Laughter.*] Those who vote against the Government are condemning my right hon. Friend—[*cries of* "No!"]—and I understand that everybody, on all sides of the House, is agreed that my right hon. Friend has behaved admirably. [*General cheers.*] On the other hand, if there be any who concur with the criticisms hastily passed, if I may venture to say so, by my hon. Friend the Member for Macclesfield, they are equally bound to support the Government, because if they do not support the Government they are condemning Lord Penrhyn. [*Laughter.*] Under these circumstances I hope it will be generally thought that the Debate has gone far enough, and that we need not emphasise what has passed by going to the trouble of a division. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) characterised the Debate as memorable in the industrial history of this country, and went so far as to say that the House of Commons would some day, perhaps, not regret that the Motion for Adjournment intervened between the South African Committee, which had for its object the correction of undisciplined wealth abroad, while this Motion sought to keep in check irresponsible capital at home. He regretted that the sympathetic speech of the First Lord of the Treasury offered no solution of the Penrhyn dispute. He could not follow the right hon. Gentleman that the House of Commons was out of place in discussing a momentous question like this. He would follow him, however, in not importing into his version of the dispute any question as to Lord Penrhyn, whose heart he did not question, but whose head had sadly failed him, and in regard to whom the opinion of his own class was, that one Lord Penrhyn made an adjournment, 10 Lord Penrhyn's might make a riot, and 100 Lord Penrhyn's might make a revolution. He ventured to say that if they could hear the opinion of the whole Conservative Party of Lord Penrhyn's attitude it would be to advise him to take the first opportunity of climbing down from the position that he had made untenable by his intolerance. The First Lord of the Treasury took some credit to his Party for its connection with the passing of the laws that made for freedom of combination. Lord Cross's conduct towards that end deserved, and secured at the time, the approval of every labourer, irrespective of politics; but they complained—at least he did—that the old traditions of the Tory Party were being departed from in Lord Penrhyn's attitude. The First Lord of the Treasury had no right to say that the House of Commons should not press this matter any further. The House of Commons he regarded as the highest tribunal in this country, and a Chamber in which the workmen, whether combined or not, had the utmost trust and confidence on the bedrock principles that affected their right to live and to combine. When the First Lord of the Treasury told them that they would do no good by discussing this question, he would say respectfully that his suggestion was simply sterile, because, beyond a few stilted commonplaces, there was no suggestion for any solution by means of which Lord Penrhyn would come to his senses and concede at once the elementary right of every Englishman to sell his labour under conditions that he himself might determine. The labour leaders and workmen involved in this dispute had been conciliatory almost to the point of subserviency. He did hope that before this Debate was over the Board of Trade would suggest some means by means of which the quarrymen would be able to follow their peaceful, constitutional demand for representation. If it was not conceded to them they would perhaps have to resort to means and methods that other workmen in other parts of the country had sometimes adopted, and not always with the preaching of sermons, the passing of resolutions in chapels, and the singing of hymns. However much they might regret it, they had got an industrial calamity in Bethesda. They had got there a social question that touched the very well-springs of representation in a free country, and unless the First Lord of the Treasury could devise some means by which this wealthy mine and quarry owner could be brought to his own senses, then he admitted that Parliament was impotent and that the House of Commons was unable to keep in check what he believed might be construed by some men some day as an overt act on the part of a rich man using unfairly and unjustly and ungenerously his enormous power of wealth to drive men, through starvation, to do that which, he trusted, they might never have recourse to. The question in dispute was not how much per ton the quarrymen should ask Lord Penrhyn for their labour; not whether they should dictate to the manager or he should dictate to them, or whether their wages should be high or low. The question was, whether, in the year 1877, they would allow the power of the plutocrat to do what was unfortunately done in Germany and France, but which, if attempted in England, would be resisted and fought and overwhelmed, to the discomfiture of the Lord Penrhyn of the day and of the future. They had been told that Lord Penrhyn admitted the right of legitimate combination. In that he made a virtue of necessity, not daring to challenge the right. Lord Penrhyn, it was admitted, had taken the action for which he was being criticised because the men threatened to strike. Was he omnipotent in the kingdom of Wales, this lord who talked in so lofty a strain? In his opinion the fault of the Welsh quarrymen was that they had been so conciliatory and had not struck on the spur of the moment, when Lord Penrhyn was in a difficulty. The fairness of the quarrymen in giving six months' notice was conduct which a peer and aristocrat ought not to be so ungentlemanly as to overlook. The men were justified in asking for an increase of wages, having regard to the prices ruling in the market, and when they threatened to strike they only did the opposite of that which masters did when they gave notice of a reduction in a certain time, or in the alternative of a lock-out. If Lord Penrhyn's quarries had been in the Rhondda Valley and he had had to deal with the colliers there, it was possible that his castle might have been pulled down about his ears. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Yes; it was because these men had been too conciliatory and peaceable, and had been singing hymns instead of learning how to box that the aristocrat had dared to presume on their lack of obstinacy. The criticisms which had been passed upon the men's committee had been cheered in the House by the very same gentlemen who were enthusiastic a year ago when a committee of German Jews were concerned in the invasion of a friendly State. In their opinion a Dr. Jameson, a Cecil Rhodes, or other filibusters could defy the law and deserved to be acclaimed as patriots; but if a few workmen without abusing their master approached him and submitted a peaceful resolution their action was described as tyranny which must be suppressed. The action of Sir Courtenay Boyle had been critised by hon. Members opposite, but the Government were responsible for the action of the Board of Trade, and if hon. Gentlemen opposite thought that the Government were unwise in striving to preserve order by preventing people, to whatever class they might belong, from making fools of themselves, they ought to bring forward a vote of want of confidence against their Ministers. A continental Socialist had said to him the other day:—

> "If there had been a dispute of this character upon the Continent, our governing classes would have made no inquiry, and would not have allowed the Minister at the Board of Trade to intervene. No Minister would have dared to write a letter like that which Sir Courtenay Boyle wrote to Lord Penrhyn. But the fact that such action is not possible on the Continent means that some day we shall have to solve our social and industrial problems all at once, perhaps with bloodshed and anarchy. Now I know how it is that you Englishmen are such practical people, and have conquered the world's markets. You keep off the possibility of revolution by insisting on reforms. When a Jameson rebels you imprison him; when a Lord Penrhyn does what he ought not to do you correct him, and when a labour leader exceeds his rights you punish him."

For his part, if Lord Penrhyn were not checked he saw no reason why this dispute should not go on, why the men should not fight him and starve him, rich as he was, into submission. There was a limit even to his purse, and a picket might be established in the valley of Bethesda, strong enough to prevent any workmen from going to take employment. [*Ministerial cries of* "Violence!"]

No; he left violence to hon. Members opposite, and was content to rely upon persuasive argument. The hon. Member for Macclesfield had said that one of the demands of the men was the establishment of a minimum wage. Well, had not the principle of the minimum wage been accepted by the hon. Member's own Government? The 4s. 6d. a day asked for was only the average pay when the men were at work. It was contended that Lord Penrhyn was justified, and within his right, in suspending his men. Shylock was also within his right when he demanded his pound of flesh, and they all knew Shylock's punishment, and perhaps Lord Penrhyn's punishment might come sooner than he expected. The tone of Lord Penrhyn, of his letter, and of his representative, and his attitude of lordly indifference were not in keeping with modern requirements. He did not object so much to the nasty thing Lord Penrhyn had done as to the nasty way in which he had done it. He ought to have shown better manners in his negotiations with his men, and ought not to have flouted a Government Department as this lordly legislator had thought fit to do. He resented and repudiated the insinuation that there had been intimidation of non-union men by unionists. It had been hinted that the action resolved upon by the men had not been approved by all of them. It was, however, impossible to get over the fact that all the men who had gone out, non-unionists as well as unionists, had stuck together up to the present, and would continue to do so. Another point had to be dealt with. Seventy-one men had been dismissed. ["No, no!"] Suspended or dismissed. Why not say deprived of employment? Why call things by false names? If these seventy-one men were to present themselves at the works to-morrow, or three months hence, for employment, as he hoped they would not, and the other men were starved back into submission, as he trusted they would not be, then would not the suspension of these seventy-one men be interpreted as dismissal? Was not this suspension a premonitory symptom of dismissal? For combination these men had been suspended, and this suspension might be interpreted as dismissal. The Board of Trade were invoked to settle this dispute in a simple way, and there were Members who said the Board had acted unjustly. They did not say that two years ago, when men like himself, who did not hesitate to grasp the nettle, said conciliation was needed. The Bill was asked for and assented to, it passed unanimously through the House, and not even the hon. Member for Macclesfield or the son of Lord Penrhyn objected; but now, because the interposition of the Board was in favour of the men, the Act was repudiated. This quibble about deputation and committee was not fair to the House of Commons. Lord Penrhyn allowed a deputation on August 17. What was the difference between a deputation of the men and a committee of the men? An electoral college of 56 decides there shall be an Executive Committee of 11, who in turn appoint a deputation of 7 workmen. If Lord Penrhyn condescended to see a deputation on August 17, 1896, then he ought equally to have seen a smaller, businesslike, technical committee five months later. It was well known that Messrs. Harland and Wolff, Sir William Houldsworth, William Allan, Mr. Whiteley, or Mr. Kenyon would in the case of any dispute arising with their workpeople, send for and consult with the Executive Committee of the District Association. What these men could do with safety, profit, and satisfaction, Lord Penrhyn, by compulsion and pressure from the House, or the force of public opinion, should be forced to submit to. There was at stake not the question of a strike or the question of the intervention of the Board of Trade; the question to decide was, should the workmen have the right to sell their labour through their own agencies and by their own selection? Lord Penrhyn contravened that doctrine, and on him rested the responsibility for what had taken place. It had been said the prolongation of the Debate would do harm. Would Lord Penrhyn, if the Debate stopped, reconsider his attitude? Would the men be allowed to resume work to-morrow? If he would not or could not do that, then the House of Commons would have to consider whether there should not be applied to the brutal, intolerant employer that treatment which years ago the House applied to labouring men in labour disputes. In the streets of London a cabman had only to whistle the "Dead March" in *Saul* to another cabman with whom he disagreed, and he was liable to be hauled before a magistrate and get a month. To call a man a "blackleg" might mean three months for intimidation. Three men waiting outside a factory and seen by a policeman might come within the clutches of the law, and 500 men peaceably assembled were liable to be convicted.

*Mr. SPEAKER called the hon. Member to order; his remarks were travelling outside the matter before the House.

Mr. BURNS concluded by remarking that what was sauce for the labouring goose should be sauce for the lordly gander. He admitted that it was very difficult for the House of Commons to intervene in labour disputes of this character. He admitted that if it did interfere it would be found possibly that the same power asked for against the master would be used against the workmen, but fortunately that alternative was never likely to occur, because the Conciliation Act provided a middle course by which the matters in dispute could be made the subject of public arbitration, which could be voluntarily adopted. If either side objected, then the mighty force of public opinion, stronger than troops or police, and in some cases than Acts of Parliament, would act against those who dared push aside the Conciliation Act and ignore those fundamental relations between master and men Englishmen have observed in the past, and which had prevented many disputes assuming that serious character they had in America. He appealed to Lord Penrhyn not to force this quarrel further; not to drive away from their native place the men who had earned his wealth, and had rendered it possible for him to assume the power and means of insulting them in their native land, where they had worked in removing a mountain around which they had played as children. They had known only this employment, which had been carried on under peaceful conditions but a single irresponsible individual could arouse passions that the Conciliation Act could control, and the House of Commons should not permit any man, though a Peer, to use his monopoly, stand above law, and bring poverty, misery, and despair into this Welsh valley. He appealed to Lord Penrhyn to leave his hard-hearted policy, to put aside the greed of the new millionaire and monopolist, and not ruin and insult the men whose labour gave him his wealth and position. If he would not respond to that appeal, then Englishmen would treat him as he deserved. Children would mock him, women would spurn him, and the Welsh quarrymen would take to combination as they never had before. They would organise as the Northumberland miners had organised, and he was ready to help them. It would then be impossible for any man to flout public opinion and legislation in the scandalous way Lord Penrhyn had.

On the return of Mr. Speaker after the usual interval,

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he represented a constituency whose whole interests were in a speedy determination of the strike, and therefore he should be exceedingly unwilling to do anything to prolong the dispute unless he were convinced that in so doing there was a question of justice and right involved for a number of meritorious workmen in another constituency. He was exceedingly sorry that some passionate words had been used in defence of Lord Penrhyn, which would have the unhappy effect of prolonging a disastrous struggle. He quite agreed that it was not for the House of Commons to enter into the original dispute between the workmen and their employers, but there was one point which the House of Commons could settle, and it was a very simple one. The hon. Member for Macclesfield had said that these men were paid on the average 5s. 6d. a day, but every man who knew anything about slate quarries knew that there were days when the men could not be employed at all, and Lord Penrhyn in his computation of averages took no account of the weeks and months when the quarries were stopped owing to weather and other reasons. Times of sickness, too, had to be deducted, and accidents. It was perfectly true there might be men earning their £15 a month, but cases were submitted to Lord Penrhyn where men were not earning £1 a week. What the men asked was that as long as they worked hard and skilfully, and did their work honestly, they should be paid, not exactly equally, but in proportion to their skill and industry without regard to considerations of luck. At the beginning of the month one face of rock was given to one set of men and another face to another set, and the result was that a certain set of men who got favourable terms from the management made probably very high wages, especially the contractors, but the bulk of them, taking the average, earned very low wages indeed. The men asked that this should be equalised; that there should be no favouritism. Did the hon. Member know how long it took to master this trade—one of the most highly-skilled in the United Kingdom? No man could master this trade without an apprenticeship of fully seven years at least. And it was a trade carried on at the risk of their lives. Most of those men in the course of their employment met with serious accidents, and in the course of a year five or seven men got killed. Yet, in face of all that, the hon. Member for Macclesfield sneered at a minimum wage of 4s. 6d. per day! The hon. Member distinctly challenged the right of any to say that Lord Penrhyn had been put in the wrong by refusing the interference of the Board of Trade in connection with the Conciliation Bill. Now that was a fair issue, not merely for this House, but for the public. [" Hear, hear!"] They would know in future that they were fighting at any rate for the principle of conciliation in labour disputes. They had that not merely on the assertion of the Opposition side of the House, but by the admission of the friends of Lord Penrhyn himself. The first point of the hon. Gentleman was that Lord Penrhyn had not refused the right of legitimate combination to the men. But Lord Penrhyn had refused to recognise the right of the committee to speak on behalf of the men, though the committee was elected openly and fairly by the men. How could 3,000 men, except through a committee, make known their grievances? Lord Penrhyn's idea of combination was this. They might meet and pass resolutions, and register themselves as the members of a trade union; but directly they began to put the union into active operation he refused to recognise the representatives. It was a perfect farce, and a dishonest contention to say that Lord Penrhyn recognised the right of the men to combine. What precipitated the strike was the suspension of the 58 members of the committee, together with 13 others. The hon. Member had said that that was done because the committee had passed a resolution announcing a strike in March. But the House had not been told that something like 80 per cent. of the men had previously passed a resolution calling for an immediate strike. The whole action of the committee was directed to restraining the men from striking on the spot. There was another point which the hon. Gentleman had not explained, and which had been overlooked by the agent of the quarry in the statement circulated to hon. Members. Why were the 13 men suspended who were not members of the committee? Simply because they had dared to give evidence to the committee in support of the statements of grievances to Lord Penrhyn. No reason at all had been assigned for the dismissal of these men.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Misrepresentation.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that Lord Penrhyn called the giving of evidence with regard to grievances "misrepresentation." But these 13 men were not the only men who had made complaints. The whole 3,000 workmen had made complaints on different points; but Lord Penrhyn did not dismiss them all. He wished to strike at the leaders, and so intimidate all the men into submission. How hollow, then, was this profession of Lord Penrhyn's that he did not refuse the right of the men to combine, when, directly they did combine, he threatened to suspend and discharge the first men who offered to give effect to the combination. As to another point of the hon. Member for South Northamptonshire, there was a quarry committee prior to 1885. When the late Lord Penrhyn had the quarry, there was a quarry committee, and all the points that were raised now. What the men asked for was simply a restoration of the old rule in the quarry. The hon. Member for South Northamptonshire, who had a personal interest in the quarry, said that the old committee were dismissed because there were complaints against it—that some of the grievances of the men were withheld from the management. Of course the committee, which presented the grievances, reviewed them first, and withheld those which they did not think substantial. And yet that was made the cause of complaint. Then, as to Lord Penrhyn's reasons for refusing the interference of the Board of Trade. They were very curious. That placed in the forefront by the hon. Member for South Northants was that Lord Penrhyn was not supplied with the whole of the correspondence between the men and the Board of Trade. That point had been disposed of by the President of the Board of Trade. Lord Penrhyn was supplied with it as soon as he applied for it. [Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: "Not for three weeks."] At any rate, Lord Penrhyn had refused to submit the dispute to the arbitration of the Board of Trade before he knew of the existence of that correspondence. Therefore the reason given was hollow and insincere. Then Lord Penrhyn said that he objected to outside interference with the management of his private affairs. But his action throughout this controversy was inconsistent with that statement. Lord Penrhyn invited the men to present their grievances to him at his Bangor office; and before the men appeared, he prepared a written reply to the deputation and sent it to the Press. [Mr. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT: "No."] If the hon. Member had mastered his brief he would not have contradicted him on that point. In the course of an interview Lord Penrhyn said that the reply had been sent to the Press beforehand, in order that the men might be able to read it the next day. This was the man who objected to outside interference. Then Lord Penrhyn went up to London to interview the Board of Trade, and entered into a correspondence with them. Why did he not refuse interference from the first? Up to the point when he thought that the Board of Trade and the public might be persuaded to go against the men, Lord Penrhyn was perfectly willing to allow the interference. The hon. Member for South Northants said that Lord Penrhyn was not going to submit the matter to the Board of Trade, since the Board seemed to have taken sides against him. Yes, it was only when he saw that the Board of Trade would not play his game, that he refused the interference. What then became of Lord Penrhyn's high principle of objecting to people interfering in his private affairs? Lord Penrhyn sent his reply to the men to the Press and took the public into his confidence! Why did he do so? Because he thought he could divert public sympathy from the men. When it was a question of starving the men into submission, Lord Penrhyn was willing to take the Board of Trade, the public, everybody in fact, into his confidence; but when it was a question of the Board of Trade and the public assisting the men to arrive at a just and equitable settlement of the dispute, he discovered that there was a high principle involved, and that he could not allow any interference by anybody in the management of his private affairs. Lord Penrhyn had also by means of the circular he had sent to every Member of the House taken the House into his confidence as to the manner in which he managed his quarries; so that from first to last his action was absolutely inconsistent with the principle he had himself laid down. Again, Lord Penrhyn's offer to allow a shorthand writer and an interpreter to be present at the interview between him and the men, provided they could be found in the ranks of the quarrymen themselves, was cruel and insulting. How many men employed either in a colliery or a quarry could write shorthand? The thing was absurd. Then, again, Lord Penrhyn was palpably insincere. Knowing, as he did, that there was no shorthand writer among the men, he made a proposal that was perfectly futile and nugatory. Lord Penrhyn also said that no one had challenged the accuracy of the report of the interview between him and his men which he had made public. Why, he had himself actually challenged the accuracy of the transcript of the shorthand notes of the interview which he himself made public. Lord Penrhyn first supplied a copy of the transcript to the Press. This gentleman who objects to any public interference in his private affairs took the public into his confidence before he held any communication on the subject of the interview with the men. A few days after the report of the interview was published in the Press he wrote to the men saying that the first transcript was not correct, and forwarding a corrected copy. The transcript sent to the men was in fact "doctored."

Everyone who knew the personal relations between the Special Correspondent of *The Times* and Lord Penrhyn knew that *The Times* correspondent was not likely to be prejudiced in favour of the men, and that he had at his disposal all the information in the possession of Lord Penrhyn. What, then, did *The Times* Correspondent in regard to this dispute between the men and Lord Penrhyn say as to the two conflicting versions of the interview? He promised in his leters to *The Times* on January 6 that it would be his object to procure the two versions and compare them. *The Times* Correspondent had never fulfilled that promise. Not a line had since appeared in *The Times* on that particular part of the dispute. What was the inference to be drawn from that circumstance? Why, that if the difference between the two versions was unsubstantial, *The Times* Correspondent—who was Lord Penrhyn's counsel and a brother of Lord Penrhyn's solicitor—would be certain to point out the fact in *The Times.* Who, then, could say that the notes of the interview were reliable? He did not blame the shorthand writer who took down the notes of the conversation between Lord Penrhyn and the men. It was difficult even for a trained reporter to take down a conversation, and the gentleman who reported the interview was not a reporter, but a clerk employed in taking notes of letters dictated to him. Then came the question of the interpreter who was present at the interview. It had been stated that he was drawn from the ranks of the men. That was not strictly accurate. The man had been a quarryman at one period of his career, but he was now engaged in Lord Penrhyn's office. That would give the House an indication of the sort of half truths which Lord Penrhyn had conveyed to the public.

MR. DOUGLAS-PENNANT: The man is employed at the port.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is exactly my point. He is one of the officials down at the port of Bangor, and yet we had him described as a quarryman by the hon. Member for Macclesfield.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I meant to say that he had been one of the men.

MR. DOUGLAS-PENNANT: This man had been a quarryman, but is now employed on the quay.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is what I said.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I hope the hon. Gentleman will be able to conclude his speech without so many colloquies across the floor of the House.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I did not invite those interruptions by which hon. Members opposite have confirmed my point.

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not mean that the hon. Member had invited the interruptions.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he did not wish to suggest anything against the interpreter. All he wished to imply was that whilst the man could interpret into English what the men said in Welsh, he could not interpret into Welsh what Lord Penrhyn said in English. Lord Penrhyn also objected to the presence on the deputation of Mr. W. H. Williams, the one leader of the men which the men desired to have with them. That meant that Lord Penrhyn wanted to exclude every one of the leaders of the men from the interviews in order that he might browbeat the men in his usual style. What did the Correspondent of *The Times* say? He said the men had been before Lord Penrhyn for four hours and that most of the time had been taken up with the cross-examination of the men by Lord Penrhyn. Lord Penrhyn bullied these men, he said, "How dare you? Why should you say this? What ground have you got for that?" Lord Penrhyn shouted at these monoglot Welshmen—[*cries of* "Oh!"]—that was the fact, and that was one of the reasons why the men insisted on there being an outsider at the conference, and why Lord Penrhyn objected to it. He proceeded on the assumption that these men were a pack of liars, who misrepresented the facts. That was not the way to receive a deputation, and the men were perfectly right to demand that there should be an outsider present. It was significant that during the whole of the recess there was not a single speech delivered on Tory platforms in which the Conciliation Bill was not lauded as a sample of Tory legislation, and yet at the first attempt that was made to put it into operation it was denounced by a

Tory Member amid the cheers of the whole of his colleagues. [" Hear, hear! "] That was a fair sample of the sincerity of hon. Members in this matter. These men were not the men to make wild and unreasonable demands. After four months' struggle they were perfectly peaceable. The quarry agents, whom probably the men blamed more than they blamed Lord Penrhyn, lived amongst them, and yet he had never heard of a single quarryman who had been turned adrift by the action of the agent who had ever raised his finger or hurled a menace or insult at one of these agents. These men were perfectly right in asking that the influence of the House of Commons should be brought to bear on the Board of Trade, with a view of promoting fair conciliation.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said he entirely agreed as to the efficacy of the Conciliation Act, but there had been a want of tact by the Board of Trade in this case. With regard to Lord Penrhyn's objection to the reporter proposed, it was natural that everyone should want a reporter to report technical questions correctly, and if proper advice had been brought to bear he thought that Lord Penrhyn would undoubtedly have accepted that. He thought the men had the right to choose their own representatives just as in a law case a man had the right to choose his own counsel. That was what ought to have been pressed upon Lord Penrhyn, but it must be recollected that 30 years ago most employers objected to any agent representing the men they employed in a dispute. He must say that he did not believe that conciliation could be carried out by an ukase from Whitehall Gardens, and he ventured to think the Board of Trade had been much too previous in this case. He thought that a "deputation" was the correct word to use, and that that represented a real conference between the employer and his men. They should try and get these men to work in the quarries again, because, they might depend upon it, mistakes had been made all round.

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham) said there seemed to be a misapprehension as to what the terms a "committee" and a "deputation" really meant. He had no doubt that, as it had been on many occasions, it was a deputation, and in all well managed trades unions the committee selected from the body of the workmen were invariably sent as the deputation to negotiate the matter in dispute with their employers. He found that the workmen passed a resolution in which they asked that a representative of the Board of Trade should, if possible, be present at the first interview. He could fully understand that, for in previous labour disputes they had realised positions where it would have been in the interests of a peaceful solution if a disinterested person had taken part in the negotiations as an intermediary. If the hon. Member for Carnarvon was correct in his description of the way in which Lord Penrhyn treated these men he could fully understand that they required some disinterested outsider to be present. As to the possibilities of one of the workmen in the quarry being asked to act as interpreter or shorthand writer, he would ask hon. Members to realise the position of such a man who knew that his bread depended on his demeanour before his employer. It was surely a wise demand on the part of the workmen that an interpreter and shorthand writer should be chosen who was independant of the action of their employer, in addition to which Lord Penrhyn could have had his own interpreter present to watch on behalf of his interests. He commented on what had been said by two hon. Members opposite with regard to the men having been accustomed to send a collective note to the employer that they would be absent on a certain day. For years that had been accepted, and no demur had been raised, but on the present occasion the men were told that they must make individual application. There was another thing in the circular which had not been mentioned—that not only did Lord Penrhyn refuse to accept the mediation of the Board of Trade, but he refused previously to accept arbitration. At the interview of 17th August,

> "Lord Penrhyn informed the deputation that they would be held personally responsible, that he would recognise no committee; he charged the deputation with misrepresentation but the specific instances he then gave of alleged misrepresentation were within a week fully proved to be groundless."

Last year, when the Conciliation in Trades Disputes Bill was before the House, there was a great fear that the workmen would not accept it. He was glad the first objection to accept it had come from a large employer of labour, and had proved to the country that the workmen were ready at all times to avail themselves of and to carry out any Act which the House might pass. The men desired to avail themselves of the Act passed last year to settle these disputes. They tried to put the machinery of the Act in operation; the employer refused arbitration, and said he would not allow the Board of Trade to interfere because the matter in dispute was his "private affair!" To call the stopping of work of a whole industrial community, an attempt to depopulate a whole district his "private affair" was preposterous. The country as a whole, and not only North Wales, had a vested interest in this dispute. Some in the House disputed the right of any man to put his hand on any hill or valley, field or plain, and say it was his own. If the law gave him sanction the welfare of a portion of its people was too valuable to be treated as a private commodity, and he hoped the Board of Trade in their transactions between employers and employed in the future would carry out the same idea. The First Lord of the Treasury said "This matter is bigger than the Board of Trade in its results." This was true. For many years there had not been a dispute which had attracted to it so much attention, and which had evoked so much sympathy as this. Let Lord Penrhyn learn the lesson that a wise man should learn; that public opinion was against him. It had been said that no law could touch him. No man was honest who was made so by Act of Parliament. There was a law which was above that House and outside, and he did not envy the state of mind of any man who was not susceptible to the law of public opinion. Everywhere throughout the country, in the Press, and on the platform, and in the minds and hearts of men everywhere there was nothing but denunciation of Lord Penrhyn's action. The result was a widening of the chasm between employer and employed in this country. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"] Every man who had the industrial prosperity of his country at heart should seek to narrow and not widen that chasm—["hear, hear!"]—to soothe and conciliate and not to embitter and irritate their relations. The industrial prosperity of this country could not live by conflict. ["Hear, hear!"] This conduct of Lord Penrhyn's would largely depreciate the character of the whole employing class in this country. [*Ministerial laughter and cries of* "No!"] It would have an effect outside North Wales to a greater extent than Gentlemen opposite imagined. He had been amongst the quarrymen of North Wales. He knew them to be honest, respectable men, and the working men of the North of England were connected with them by ties of labour and toil. The First Lord of the Treasury asked how it would be if workmen and workmen's leaders had made against them charges similar to those against Lord Penrhyn? If the workmen had acted in the same arbitrary fashion and said they would strike unless Lord Penrhyn discharged Mr. Young and chose a fresh manager, because they would not meet him, he would have as soundly condemned them, as he condemned Lord Penrhyn now. He hoped Lord Penrhyn's heart would soften, and if the law could not touch him he hoped he would accept the mediation of the Board of Trade, and whether in the presence of its representatives or not, would try by the help of the men to bring this matter to a peaceful solution. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) pointed out while the Leader of the Opposition deprecated the use of any language which would embitter this controversy he himself on the first night of the Session referred to it in terms by no means judicial or savouring of an impartial mind which were entirely uncalled for and in a manner almost disorderly, and before any evidence had been read or the House had ordered any correspondence to be laid on the Table.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The correspondence was published before the commencement of the Session.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER said that it had been published only in a fragmentary manner, and had not set out the cases of the respective parties in a complete form. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire had taken the earliest opportunity to prejudge the case to the utmost of his power, and to condemn the course which had been taken by one party to the dispute. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had hoped that by the course he had taken he would have been able to settle the dispute between the parties, but he thought that the House would be of opinion that that course was most ill-calculated to effect that object. The Board of Trade appeared not to have endeavoured to ascertain, in the first place, whether both parties would be ready to accept their decision with regard to the matters in dispute. He should have thought that a very slight experience in connection with these matters would have convinced the right hon. Gentleman that his suggestion was not likely to bring about an amicable settlement of the questions raised between the parties. It was clear that Parliament had never intended that a public department should attempt to settle such questions by intervention rather than by conciliation. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade must have been thinking of the action of another President—the President of the United States—in connection with the questions raised between this country and Venezuela, who had thought to settle those questions by intervention. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to have forgotten that when Parliament passed the Conciliation Act they had refused to introduce the compulsory element into it, and had placed the whole matter upon a voluntary basis. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire had talked about power having been given to the Board of Trade to do this, that, or the other. But it was clear that Parliament, in passing the Act in question, had intended that if the intervention of the Board of Trade was not acceptable to both parties they were to retire in favour of some more acceptable arbitrator. There was nothing in the Act which compelled either party to submit to the intervention of the Board of Trade against his will. The charge he had to bring against the Board of Trade, not against Sir Courtenay Boyle the able permanent Secretary of the Department, who he knew was always anxious to carry out the instructions of his Chief, was that their letters were not calculated to bring about an amicable settlement of this dispute. The tone adopted by the Department in those letters was of a most irritating character and was ill-calculated to bring about a settlement, while it was one that no employer of labour who respected himself could be expected to submit to. He begged to say that he approached this subject having no authority on the part of Lord Penrhyn to speak on his behalf. He had had a large experience on this subject because he had had the management for many years of a large coal mine, in which some 2,000 men were employed, a large number of whom, and their fathers and grandfathers had passed their lives in that employment. Those men had little or no connection with any local union or trade combination. It had been stated, and the statement had not been contradicted, that every man employed by Lord Penrhyn was at liberty to join a trade union if he desired to do so. It was, however, charged against Lord Penrhyn that he had taken a course that was hostile to the liberty of combination. That assertion was absolutely untrue. The House would realise that there was not only such a thing as the right to combine, but there was also such a thing as the right not to combine, and it was the latter right that Lord Penrhyn desired to maintain. Some hon. Members had spoken of this committee as if it were freely elected and a thoroughly representative body—as if it were the exponent of the majority and the minority of those employed in the quarry. The correspondence showed that the Committee represented the dominant majority, who ignored the rights of the minority. [" No, no! "] Their resolutions clearly showed this. Complaints were made that the majority frequently endeavoured to interfere with matters affecting wages and the power of earning—that these must be entirely controlled by these trade union delegates. Perhaps it would be said that it was a libel to say that any pressure was ever at any time used to force men into the unions. He well recollected what took place in Lord Londonderry's collieries. A strike occurred on the ground that the trade unionists insisted that the overmen should join the union or be dismissed.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham): That is not correct. The overmen were not asked to join the union. [*Opposition cheers.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I apologise —it was the deputies. I had not the name on my tongue—[*cheers*]—but the deputies for my purpose are the same thing. ["Hear, hear!"] The trade union insisted that the deputies should join the union or be dismissed.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham): That was done because Lord Londonderry offered to give the deputies so much more if they would leave the union. ["Oh!" *and Opposition laughter.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I believe the statement of the hon. Member to be entirely inaccurate. What I believe happened was this—that when these deputies were threatened by the union if they did not join the union Lord Londonderry said he should stand by them. [*Cheers.*] He told them he would see that they were not injured and that their wages should be increased.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham): That is not the case. What he gave was money to leave the union. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER believed he had stated the fact, for Lord Londonderry made every one in his employ free to be a member of the union or not. That he had authority to say. Lord Londonderry in this particular case said, "I shall not desert the men who refuse to submit to this insolent dictation." That showed the spirit in which these trade union leaders approached the liberty of workmen, either combined or not combined. Could it be wondered at that Lord Penrhyn should resist oppression of this kind? Lord Penrhyn was entitled—and he was bound as a man of honour—to stand by his workmen who declined to join any trades union. He was entitled to say that he should not hand over the management of his concerns to a body dominated by such a spirit of trade union combination as was shown in this matter. He was going to dwell for a moment on one point, which was, that the publication by the Board of Trade of this correspondence was, in his judgment, a most unfortunate act. ["Hear, hear!"] They did not themselves, he believed, apprehend this. The Board of Trade sent a portion of the correspondence to the representatives of the men. What object could be served by that? The President of the Board of Trade said he did not send the correspondence until he had arrived at the conclusion that the attempts at a settlement had failed. Then why did he send it? He did not think that the publication of this correspondence could serve any good purpose. His right hon. Friend had published the correspondence on one side, while the correspondence on the other side could not be obtained. He could not understand what good object was to be served.

*MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade did not publish any correspondence. They were invited to do so, and I strongly objected. The correspondence was sent so that they might exercise their judgment on the terms of Lord Penrhyn.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER contended that was the same thing. His right hon. Friend thought it right that the men should be acquainted with Lord Penrhyn's proposals. Surely there might have been other means of enabling the men to become acquainted with those proposals. He presumed Lord Penrhyn could have communicated his views to his men without the assistance of the Board of Trade. He did not hesitate to say that the premature publication of a portion of the correspondence had very largely embittered the controversy, and that the intervention of the Board of Trade had so far resulted in his hon. Friend being "slated." [*Laughter and cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Reference had been made to the labour correspondents. He had never believed in the system of labour correspondents, and in the last Parliament he called attention to several highly improper appointments, improper owing to their political, partisan character. [*Cheers.*] One of those appointments was that of Mr. Rowley, who happened to be labour correspondent for the district in which the Penrhyn quarries were. It was upon the information of that gentleman that in this matter the Board of Trade was set in motion.

*MR. RITCHIE: I must absolutely contradict that statement. There was no communication whatever between that correspondent and the Board of Trade, myself, or anyone connected with the

Board of Trade, in connection with this dispute during any time of the negotiations. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER was glad they were to understand that the Board of Trade took no earthly notice of their labour correspondent.

*MR. RITCHIE: None whatever. [*A laugh.*] Labour correspondents are not appointed to give the Board of Trade information with regard to disputes and strikes. They are appointed to give the Board information with regard to trade unions and employment. I know nothing of the gentleman. But we received no communication; we invited no communication, from this gentleman with regard to the dispute in the Penrhyn quarries. We heard nothing from him, and we made no inquiries.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER was bound to say the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was eminently satisfactory.. [*Laughter.*] Now that he understood his right hon. Friend took no notice of this gentleman's statements, he thought his right hon. Friend's official career would be less mischievous than he had feared it would be. [*Laughter and cheers.*] In conclusion, he hoped that what had taken place to-night would be an object lesson to those who desired to move a public department in the direction of interfering in labour disputes upon the request of either party concerned, for so far such interference had been dangerous and mischievous.

*MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) maintained that in its working the Conciliation Act, though it was only passed last August, had already proved most beneficent. The operation of the Act had proved a blessing to thousands and tens of thousands of people. The right hon. Gentleman's intervention had not only resulted in the putting an end to railway disputes, but in the settlement of troubles between capital and labour in other instances. It was an evil omen when an Act like the Conciliation Act had been passed that a peer of the realm should be the first to refuse to pay any attention to it. He should be sorry to say anything which would tend to exasperate feelings on either side, and he hoped that one of the results of the Debate would be that Lord Penrhyn would take good counsel and put an end to the conflict as soon as possible. He might point out that the President of the Board of Trade had not exhausted the powers of the Conciliation Act in the matter. He might take a further step. [*Cries of* "What step?"]. The right hon. Gentleman, consulting the Act, said the President of the Board of Trade, on the application of an employer or a body of workmen, could appoint a conciliator—["Oh, oh" *and laughter*]—who would make inquiries into the causes of the dispute and report to the Board of Trade. That report could be called for in the House, and in that way public attention could be brought to bear on the facts. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] And there was a yet further step the President of the Board of Trade could take. On the application of both parties—[*Ministerial cheers*]—he could appoint an arbitrator. [*Laughter and* "Hear, hear!"] A question of more serious importance had not been brought before the House for years, and he warned hon. Gentlemen opposite—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh" *and laughter*]—that the dispute had been discussed in every workshop in the kingdom. [*Laughter.*] They must be aware also, if they read their newspapers—["Oh, oh" *and laughter*]—that resolutions had been passed by every trade council in the kingdom in reference to the dispute, and there could be no doubt that a very strong feeling had been created in the country about it. Moreover, the circumstances of the dispute were of a serious character from a public point of view. The noble Lord by the course he had taken had made himself a very dangerous advocate of the scheme of Mr. Henry George. [*Loud Ministerial laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to treat the matter with levity, but he repeated that other matters than the actual dispute were involved. One of the results of it would be to give a great impetus to the demand for the nationalisation of mines and of land. [*Ministerial laughter and cries of* "Question?"] Hon. Members opposite could not possibly be aware of the immense benefit the Conciliation Act had already been to the trade of the country, or they would not be advocates of that dangerous form of feudalism which Lord Penrhyn had put in practice. [*Laughter.*] There was not a word in the correspondence to justify the statement that Lord Penrhyn had been championing the cause of the non-union men. There had been no conflict between the union and non-union men in the matter, for both classes of men were unanimous, as one man, in asking for a proper settlement of the dispute. What, he would ask, would be the effect on small employers of labour in the country when a large employer of labour like Lord Penrhyn set such an example as he had done? [*Cheers.*] They would be able to point to the action of his lordship as a justification for resisting the Conciliation Act if it were to their interests to do so. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had complained that the President of the Board of Trade had intervened, as they termed it, in this dispute. Why, when the last Liberal Government was in power constant questions were addressed to Ministers by those very same Gentlemen to know what action the Government could take with a view to bring the then existing trade disputes to an end. During that time there was a great trade dispute in Scotland, and constant pressure was exercised on the then President of the Board of Trade, by the hon. Gentlemen opposite, to take some action which would be likely to bring about a settlement. Yet they were now to be told that the President of the Board, although certain powers had been placed in his hands by Act of Parliament to be exercised in such cases, was not to exercise those powers. He trusted the President of the Board of Trade would do in the future what he had done in this case. He was bound to say that, so far from having erred on the side of too great promptitude and too great severity, the action of the right hon. Gentleman had been marked by great moderation, by great patience and forbearance, and, what was more, he had put great pressure on the workmen to forego many of their just claims. That being so, it was a monstrous thing that there should be found in that House a man defending the action which had been taken by Lord Penrhyn—action which he believed was fraught with great mischief to the future of this country.

MR. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said that, as a large employer of labour, he had felt a very great interest in the Debate that had taken place. The dispute, into the details of which he would not enter, had a very considerable bearing on employers of labour beyond its immediate consequences or its immediate local importance. This particular dispute, it seems, was a matter of urgent public importance to the House. Well, there had been a great many strikes in this country—he had himself been engaged in dozens of them—and he had asked himself over and over again in what way this dispute differed from the ordinary disputes which had taken place from time to time, and if this dispute was a matter of urgent public importance, why should not every dispute that took place in the United Kingdom be the same? The only point in which he could see that this dispute differed from all the others was the fact that the men had appealed to the Board of Trade to act under the Conciliation Act and to settle the dispute, and that this arbitration had been refused by Lord Penrhyn. So far as he understood, the Conciliation Act was an absolutely voluntary Act. If the workmen liked to act under it they could appeal to the Board of Trade to set it in motion; if the employer liked to act under it he could make the same appeal; but there was no compulsion on either one or the other to accept the arbitration. That being so, he could not understand why so much blame should be attached to Lord Penrhyn for declining to take the decision of the Board of Trade on the matter. A great deal had been said about the liberty of the men to combine for their own protection. He thought any employer who in this year, 1897, disputed the right of workmen to combine for their own protection or for any object they liked could be little less than a fool. He was quite willing that they should combine for their own protection or to improve their condition, but he equally maintained that an employer had an equal right to decline to receive any deputation the workmen might choose to appoint. The matter on both sides was entirely one of expediency. He could not help thinking that the House, he would not like to say was going beyond its rights or its functions, but was going far in heaping such an amount of blame on an employer because he did not like to receive a particular committee to settle matters as to the way in which the work should be carried on in his quarry or workshop. He thought that it was a dangerous doctrine that, because a man did not choose to accept the arbitration of the Board of Trade—and he could not be compelled to accept it by law—he should be held up, as it were, in that House to the execration of every honest and respectable citizen. This would be making this Act, which was intended to be voluntary, in reality a compulsory Act. He never thought much of that Act, but still nobody had ever ventured to promulgate an Act which would compel arbitration in trade disputes. He thought it was perhaps going a little too far to wish for such an Act, but at the same time he did not think they would ever settle such disputes unless they did make the Act compulsory. While he wished to give the men every facility for combining, and while he admitted they had a perfect right to do whatever they liked in this way, he did hope that House would not set itself up as a sort of Court of Justice to try employers who refused the offices of the Board of Trade, and that they would recognise that he had a perfect right to refuse it, however ill-advised he might be in taking that course.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) said they had to thank the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken for the valuable admission that an employer who disputed the right of men to legitimate combination was not less than a fool. They not only accepted that dictum in theory, but would also adopt it in practice. What was the right these men said they had? The right they said they had was to combine for matters that concerned them as workmen. They did not wish, they had never claimed, to interfere in any way with the management of this quarry. They had never said a word against Mr. Young or against the subordinates upon the management. All that the men claimed was that when their wages were in dispute, and the question of their livelihood was involved, they had a right to combine to promote their own interests. Not a single instance of wrongdoing could be proved against the committee that had been dismissed by Lord Penrhyn. That committee represented the 300 non-Union men as well as the Unionists, and the former were as keen and active in this dispute as the latter. The right hon. Member for the Thanet Division had said that the object of the Act was conciliation, and not intervention. But how could anyone conciliate without intervening? The Act had two objects—the one being conciliation and the other arbitration. Unless both sides to a dispute agreed to ask for the services of the Board of Trade, arbitration could not be resorted to under the Statute. It therefore could not be resorted to in the case under consideration, because Lord Penrhyn declared that he did not want the provisions respecting arbitration to be brought into operation. There remained the expedient of conciliation, and he held that, according to the meaning and spirit of the Act, the Board of Trade was fully entitled to intervene with conciliatory purpose upon the application of one of the parties. That was what it had attempted to do. It had been said that the Department had forced its services upon Lord Penrhyn, but that was not correct, as was shown by the correspondence. In one of Sir Courtenay Boyle's letters that gentleman said :—

> "I am directed to inform you that, in accordance with the virtual understanding arrived at between Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Young, the quarrymen have been communicated with, with a view to the appointment of a deputation to wait upon you."

If that letter meant anything it must mean that Mr. Young, Lord Penrhyn's representative, and the President of the Board of Trade, had had an informal meeting, when arrangements were made as to what should be done? He agreed with the last speaker that it was ridiculous to suppose that people could be compelled as the law stood to abide by the award either of a conciliation or arbitration board. But there could be a compulsory Inquiry. [*Cries of* "No" *and* "Yes."] The cries of hon. Members below the Gangway opposite showed that they had not studied this Act; the President of the Board of Trade, upon the application of either party, might appoint someone to hold an Inquiry, and he hoped that that power would be exercised, for an Inquiry would be of great use. It was public opinion that determined the results of these controversies, and in the long run public opinion was found to be on the right side, and that side won, whether it was the side of the masters or of the men. The chief value of the Act was that it supplied an easy means of concentrating and focussing public opinion on the points in dispute. Why did Lord Penrhyn refuse conciliation? Was it, as they had heard, his haughty and feudal pride that stood in the way? No; it was because he knew that he was in the wrong. The last speaker had said that this was not a matter of urgent public importance. He differed from the hon. Member, being unable to believe that the enforced idleness of 3,000 men was an unimportant matter. If these 3,000 men had been denied employment anywhere else than in the Principality of Wales more would, he thought, have been heard about the importance of this enforced idleness. He trusted that that Debate and the position taken up by the President of the Board of Trade would encourage the men to keep in the path of law-abiding straightforwardness, and would strengthen their conviction that in the end they must triumph over Lord Penrhyn.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn," put, and negatived.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.) moved :—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon, and further to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company; that the Committee have leave to hear counsel to such extent as they shall see fit, and have power to send for persons, papers, and records."

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff) rose to move the following Amendment :—

> "That, in view of the peaceful settlement of affairs in the Chartered Company's territories, the punishment of all persons connected with the raid into the Transvaal, and the inexpediency

in the interest of all South Africa, of reopening questions which have now been disposed of, this House thinks it unnecessary to re-appoint the Select Committee of 1896."

In moving the Amendment, notice of which he had placed on the Paper, he thought it hardly necessary to offer an apology to the House for having, on the first day of the Session, prevented this Motion from being passed *sub silentio.* The extraordinary public interest which had been excited on the matter was the best justification he could possibly offer for what he did in that connection. He had had many conversations with Members of the House on the subject, and he had had very numerous communications from outside, and he thought all Members must be aware that a very strong public opinion had been excited in favour of dropping this Select Committee on the South African question. ["Hear, hear" *and* "No, no!"] So far as he could judge, it was the almost universal feeling in the House that it was grievous to the State to keep open an Inquiry which might prolong indefinitely a state of unrest in South Africa. ["Oh, oh!"] He was sure that this feeling had been expressed to him by a majority of the Members of the House—["No, no!"]—and if the Government were to relax for the occasion the ties of Party fidelity and discipline, and would intimate to their followers that they were free to vote according to their own judgment in the matter, he knew very well what the result would be. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government, so far as he could judge, did not affirm that they themselves were very keenly in favour of the reappointment of this Committee; therefore he was not open to the objection which had been alleged against him, curiously enough by many of the Radical newspapers, that in bringing forward this Amendment he was guilty of an act of disloyalty to the Government now in power, and he was not open to the charge, upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouth (Sir W. Harcourt) had made such pleasant reflections, to the effect that he and his friends had been obliged to come to the rescue of the Government frequently against their own rebellious followers. No doubt occasions of this kind had arisen, and it was sometimes embarrassing and bewildering to loyal supporters of the Government to find that when questions of great public interest arose, and discussions took place upon them in the House, the loudest cheers and strongest support given to the Government came from the opposite side of the House. [*Laughter.*] He had himself been so much taken aback by these manifestations that when a division was called he had sometimes been tempted to address his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury in the words of the bold Sir Bedivere:—

> "Oh, my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?"

[*Laughter.*] But this was not what happened on the present occasion; it was a perfectly loyal Amendment brought forward by a Member who supposed he was really doing a service to the Government by helping them to get rid of this Committee. He had been told that a compact had been made by the Government with somebody or other that this Committee should be reappointed, but he did not see how any Government could pledge the House to renew a Committee in a new Session. Surely the House was the best judge of its own dignity and honour, and if circumstances had arisen which rendered it indispensable that the Committee should be reappointed, the House could absolve itself from any breach of faith in the matter. Had any circumstances arisen since the Committee was appointed last year that rendered it inexpedient that the Committee should be reappointed? It was easy to point out that such circumstances had arisen. In the first place, with regard to the Inquiry into the existence of the Chartered Company and the desirability of continuing it in the employment of its present powers, it was well known that since the House last met this Chartered Company had prosecuted a successful war, and had restored peace within its territory, had done that at its own expense, and had been trusted by the Government of the country to do it. It would be a very inexpedient thing indeed, now that the Company had restored order in that vast region of South Africa, to go on to question its title to the territory secured. ["Hear, hear!"] The Chartered Company had a long history, but down to the Jameson raid its title was unquestioned by hon. Members on both sides of the House, and since the raid there had been absolute proof that the Government itself had ample power within the limits of the present charter to clip the wings of the Chartered Company and to prevent it from taking the aggressive against any other State in South Africa or from doing anything beyond administering its own affairs. The House knew that the Government took away from the Chartered Company the military and police powers which it had exercised in Rhodesia, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies had been placed in the position of the Board of Control of the old East India Company. The Chartered Company had not ventured to perform any administrative act whatever which was contrary to the wishes of the Secretary of State. There was no advantage, therefore, to be gained by going into the history of what had been done by the Chartered Company a year ago. He did not suppose any one imagined that the Chartered Company could be proved to have any connection whatever with the Jameson raid. ["Oh, oh!" *and cheers.*] Was it desirable to inquire into a matter of that kind now. ["Yes."] Had the House not had enough of the Jameson raid and all the circumstances connected with it? By no possibility could the inquiry into the Chartered Company's acts of last year lead to any interference with that Company beyond the power which the Colonial Secretary possessed at the present time and which was allowed by the charter. Did hon. Members propose that the property of the Company should be taken away from them after being allowed and encouraged by the Colonial Secretary to wage war to maintain that property? There was a multitude of small shareholders in the Chartered Company throughout the country besides the aristocratic capitalists, about whom the hon. Member for Northampton seemed to know more than he did. These men and women had invested a small amount of money in the Company individually, on the principle, no doubt, of backing the British lion, and was it possible that any Committee could think of taking away that property and abolishing all the rights which the Chartered Company possessed? So far, therefore, as the Chartered Company was concerned, any further inquiry by a Committee of the House could lead to no useful result whatever. Then as to the question whether the Committee could deal with Mr. Rhodes, who was looked upon by many persons as the chief offender against the peace of South Africa. Could this Committee hope to deal with Mr. Rhodes? What had been the history of Mr. Rhodes during the interval between last year and this? The House knew that he had been busily engaged in the territory which bore his name; they knew of the good work he had done there; and if they wanted to find out what the Government thought of the work of Mr. Rhodes in South Africa they had only to refer to the Queen's Speech. One passage in the Queen's Speech dealt with the rebellion in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, and it said that this rebellion had been repressed by the steadfastness and courage of the settlers, reinforced by our troops and the aid of the English and Dutch. Who had been the inspiring genius to the settlers in Rhodesia except Mr. Rhodes himself? And yet this was the man whom they were going to accuse of sowing dissension between the English and Dutch races in South Africa. [*Cheers.*] Mr. Rhodes had been the most active man in our colonies there to induce the English and Dutch races to work together. Mr. Rhodes had completely rehabilitated himself in the public opinion of this country by the work he had done since Parliament rose last year. ["No, no!" *and cheers.*] The enthusiastic receptions given to him by his countrymen in Cape Colony proved that they regarded him as the living impersonation of that spirit of private enterprise which had transformed this island kingdom into a world-wide Empire. [*Cheers.*] What was it proposed that this Committee could do to Mr. Rhodes? Suppose it came to the same conclusion as that which was arrived at after full and thorough inquiry by the Cape Parliament—that Mr. Rhodes had nothing to do with the actual raid itself, that he only made preparations and acted as Lord Loch had previously done, and that Lord Loch's conduct had never been repudiated either by Lord Ripon or by his successor, the present Colonial Secretary? That was the state of things they had to deal with, and they knew that a Committee of the House of Commons could not go well beyond the inquiry which was made at the Cape. That inquiry was most searching and thorough. He did not know if hon. Members had seen the Blue-book published by the Cape Assembly, which contained a large mass of evidence, and he said that a Committee of the House of Commons would not be able to obtain any further evidence than was submitted to a Committee of the Cape Assembly. He knew there were some people repeating current gossip, who said there ought to be wonderful revelations made, some of them affecting the Colonial Secretary and others affecting Mr. Rhodes, but he treated these reports as of no value whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] He had criticised very freely the public policy of the Colonial Secretary, but no one would dream of saying that the right hon. Gentleman personally had any complicity in the raid which took place in South Africa. To accuse him of dishonour of that kind would be idle and ridiculous. ["Hear, hear."] And in the same way he did not think they could expect to obtain any revelations as to some extraordinary conduct of Mr. Rhodes in relation to this raid beyond what they knew already. That was the position in which they would find themselves. What was to be done, supposing they came to a resolution that Mr. Rhodes was simply a man who determined to assist British subjects in the Transvaal if they rose against an oppressive Government? Supposing they were to come to that decision; would that satisfy the people who insisted that Mr. Rhodes should be their personal enemy, and who demanded that he should be banished from South Africa? They would at once say that a Committee of that House were simply accomplices with Mr. Rhodes in hushing up the whole affair. On the other hand, did they think a Committee of the House of Commons could punish Mr. Rhodes, could banish him from South Africa and exile him from public life? That House dare not lay its little finger on Mr. Rhodes. If it were to do anything of the kind it would set the whole of South Africa in a blaze. ["Hear, hear!"] That was one of the principal reasons why he had interfered in the matter. He had been anxious to prevent the House from making the mistake which it had made several times before with great loss of dignity and authority—the mistake of coming into collision with the public opinion of a powerful colony. ["Hear, hear!"] South Africa must be maintained for the British Empire by the good will and public opinion of the settlers out there, and if the House of Commons were to take upon itself to proscribe the most powerful man who had risen in late years in South Africa, the man who was beloved by the great mass of English settlers out there, he did not think it could avoid placing itself in a position from which it would with difficulty emerge without loss of authority and prestige. ["Hear, hear!"] So much for the position of that House. With regards to Mr. Rhodes, he did not know what crime he was to be accused of committing during the last year. He seemed to him to have devoted all his labours to the service of his country, just as he did at the time when he saved the whole of the territory from the frontier of Cape Colony up to the Zambesi from falling into the hands of a foreign Power, and prevented the Boers of the Transvaal from joining hands with the Germans in South-West Africa, which would for ever have prevented the predominance of the British race in that part of the world. ["Hear, hear!"] He had seen a great many articles in the newspapers lately speaking in terms of grave rebuke of the indiscretions of speech committed by Mr. Rhodes. Was he to be summoned before a Committee of the House of Commons to answer for those indiscretions of speech, to tell them what he meant by the reference to people who grew orchids or the exact meaning of that stinging phrase, "unctuous rectitude," which he used with regard to some people in this country? A man who saved or made an empire could not pick and choose his language as they did in that House—[*laughter*]—or as an editor of a newspaper sitting in his comfortable armchair could afford to do. He did not think they should punish Mr. Rhodes for committing a few crimes of that kind. So much for the position of Mr. Rhodes with regard to the Inquiry. He might say that, personally, he had no knowledge whatever of Mr. Rhodes; he never had any communication with him of any kind, and he had simply taken up this question because he believed his experience had given him a great knowledge of the sentiments entertained with regard to Imperial questions by their fellow-countrymen living in distant parts of the Empire. ["Hear hear!"] He asked himself with whom was this compact made which the Government spoke of? Was it made with the Transvaal Government? Now he did not think that idea could be maintained for a moment. If any compact of that kind had been made with the Transvaal Government he thought it had been cancelled by the conduct of President Kruger during the last twelve months, but the Blue-book showed that no such compact was ever entered into by the English Government. He ventured to recall what many Members, perhaps, had forgotten, the exact position taken up by our Government here in January, 1896. After Jameson's raid Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies asking for an assurance that justice would be done upon all the parties who had joined in the raid, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on January 7, replied:—

> "There shall be full inquiry into the circumstances of the late raid upon Transvaal territory, and steps will be taken to make it impossible for such attempts to be planned or executed in future."

That seemed to him to have been the only pledge given to people in South Africa by the Colonial Secretary. Now, what was the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman a few days after that, on January 13? He said:—

> "Now that Her Majesty's Government have fulfilled their obligations with the South African Republic, and have engaged to bring the leaders in the recent invasion to trial"—

not before a Select Committee—

> "Her Majesty's Government are anxious that the negotiations which have been conducted by you should result in a permanent settlement, by which the possibility of further internal troubles will be prevented."

So that any compact that was made with the Government at Pretoria must have been purely conditional—conditional on the carrying out of certain concessions by the Government of Mr. Kruger. The Colonial Secretary made that quite plain in the second part of his Dispatch, when he said :—

> "It is my sincere hope that President Kruger, who has hitherto shown so much wisdom in dealing with the situation, will now take the opportunity afforded to him of making of his own free will such reasonable concessions to the Uitlanders as will remove the last excuse of disloyalty and will establish the free institutions of the Republic on a firm and lasting basis."

There they had the policy of the Colonial Secretary before he allowed his better instincts to be overborne by the timid counsels of Sir H. Robinson. [Hear, hear!"] Only one more passage would he refer to as confirming that view of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. On January 15th he telegraphed again to Sir H. Robinson, and he said :—

> "There can be no settlement until the questions raised by these telegrams are disposed of. The people of Johannesburg laid down their arms in the belief that reasonable concessions would be arranged by your intervention—[*cheers*]—and until these are granted and are definitely promised you by the President the root-cause of the recent troubles will remain."

Now, in those words the right hon. Gentleman distinctly declared that the root cause of the trouble which culminated in the Jameson raid was the attempt on the part of the Transvaal Government to deprive the Uitlanders of their just civil rights. He thought the language the right hon. Gentleman there used might be said to afford a reasonable justification for the rising of the Uitlanders and their insurrection against such a tyrannical Government as that of the Transvaal. He said the President had again and again promised reform, and added that grave dissatisfaction would be caused if he (Sir H. Robinson) left Pretoria without a clear understanding on those points. Sir H. Robinson left Pretoria without a clear understanding on any point whatever. [*A cheer.*] No concession whatever was made by President Kruger in return for what we did for him. He did not blame President Kruger for that. The President was a sagacious and far-sighted man, engaged in building up an independent nation, and, speaking from an impartial point of view, he could admire the wisdom and determination with which he prosecuted his design. [*Cheers.*] He did not wonder that Mr. Kruger proved himself superior to the finished diplomatists of more civilised nations [*laughter and cheers*], because he was free from the necessity of attending to employers' liability and old age pensions [*cheers and laughter*], and strikes and trade unions, and the thousand different channels in which the energies of statesmen in a civilised country were frittered away. Mr. Kruger had only one end to accomplish. He wished to make his people free and strong, and he went direct to the accomplishment of that end. He admired Mr. Kruger for it; but he could not absolve our own Government for having neglected to obtain from him those concessions for which alone the people of Johannesburg were induced to lay down their arms, and Jameson and his men were brought to trial and punishment. No concessions of any kind had been made. On the contrary, all to whom the reputation of the Colonial Secretary was dear [*cheers and laughter*] must resent the cavalier treatment to which the right hon. Gentleman had been exposed at the hands of President Kruger. He had often heard Mr. Kruger spoken of as like one of the heroes in Plutarch; and he was reminded of the way in which Plutarch told of Sylla's treatment of the Greek orators, when they came out from Athens and wished to read to him long harangues. Sylla said to them :—

> "My good friends, pack up your speeches and be gone. I have not come here to take lessons, but to subdue rebels to obedience."

The Colonial Secretary had tried to practise on Mr. Kruger all that dialectical skill with which he so often charmed the House of Commons into obedience to his wishes. But Mr. Kruger's only reply was, "My good friend, take up your dispatches and be gone." [*Laughter and* *cheers.*] "I have not come here to listen to lectures, but to subdue a rebellious city." [*Laughter.*] Not only had no concessions been made, but Mr. Kruger had advanced his pretensions still further. The English settlers in the Transvaal were further than ever from getting the elementary rights of citizens; and we were confronted with the fact that the Boers intended to create a state of society in the Transvaal in which British subjects should be an inferior caste to the Dutchmen, who were the ruling power in the State. The immigration returns of the Cape would show a large increase in the immigration of foreigners as compared with British subjects. Many of these foreigners went straight to the Transvaal, where the Boers were building up a strong military State, centrally situated on the long line of communications between Cape Colony and Rhodesia and a great menace to the security of our possessions. Alarm was often expressed lest Mr. Kruger should some day throw off our suzerainty. Why should he? What had become of that suzerainty? As it now existed it could only be compared to Milton's description of death—"What seemed his head, the likeness of a kingly crown had on." [*Cheers.*] That suzerainty would never be a reality till we asserted our power and preponderance in South Africa. If we had no compact with anybody outside the House was there a compact with anyone within the House? Those who pressed for the appointment of this Committee were not men on the Ministerial side of the House, or Members of the Government, who might be influenced by a fancied point of honour. The men who desired the Committee were the right hon. Member for West Monmouth and the hon. Member for Northampton. If anybody's, the Committee was that of the hon. Member for Northampton. [*Cheers.*] Those who were familiar with the story of the impeachment of Warren Hastings would remember that there was one vindictive personal assailant of the great Proconsul —Sir Philip Francis—who was at the bottom of the mischief. He brought Pitt and Fox together and got the impeachment arranged. We had a Sir Philip Francis in our own day, who had brought together our modern Pitt and Fox to arrange this Inquiry, though he did not attribute to the hon. Member for Northampton the personal motives which animated Sir Philip Francis. He admired the courage and independence of the hon. Member's character, and he had always thought the hon. Member to be the only consistent man in attacking Mr. Rhodes and the Chartered Company. The hon. Member at least would not bow down to Mr. Rhodes, even when English society threw itself at his feet and the Government of Lord Rosebery heaped honours upon him and made him a Privy Councillor. Therefore he found no fault with the hon. Member for the action he had taken in the matter. But, while he was willing to do a great deal to oblige the hon. Member, when it came to making a choice between him and doing something towards maintaining the dignity of the British Empire, the hon. Member must pardon him for not giving him his support. He could not find any substance in any of the considerations that suggested themselves to his mind as possibly affording a justification for the action of the Government. On the other hand, he knew from what he had read and heard that the people of this country had grown heartily sick and weary of the irritating and humiliating references to the Jameson raid, which were now apparently to be prolonged for a year or two at the pleasure of a Committee of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] The public felt that they had sat long enough in sackcloth and ashes lamenting their sins and praising the magnanimity of President Kruger. [*Cheers.*] Let the dead past bury its dead. Let them be up and doing again. He felt sure that if they would but adopt a firm policy they would do more to bring the Dutch and English in South Africa together than by following a pusillanimous policy. [*Cheers.*] It was because an unsettled and wavering policy had been hitherto followed in regard to South Africa that many Afrikanders were inclined to gravitate towards the Dutch Republics. A favourable opportunity was now at hand for the adoption of a firm policy. Lord Rosmead was coming home. Let there, then, be an end of the policy associated with Lord Rosmead's name. He hoped the Government would select for Lord Rosmead's place someone who would lift up the standard of England and assert our power and permanent authority in South Africa. [*Cheers.*] He felt sure that if we spoke on that boldly and firmly, and above all took care to make clear that we would maintain what we said with our Imperial forces, we should command respect, and everybody would quietly assent to what we asked them to do. [*Cheers.*] The time had come for telling the Transvaal Government what we meant to have done, and to insist upon that Government carrying it out. [*Cheers.*] Much had been said against English civilisation, but at least it gave equal right to every man. [*Nationalist cries of* "No."] He did not know what hon. Gentleman opposite had to complain of, except it was that the Irish got more than their fair share of rights. [*Laughter and cheers.*] We ought certainly to insist that the Transvaal Government should give the same privileges to English settlers that Dutchmen received in our Commonwealth; and when all men were equal in South Africa we might hope to see restored order, peace and prosperity to that country. [*Cheers.*]

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said he seconded the Motion of his hon. Friend. He did so with a deep sense of the gravity of the issue before the House as regards the South African portion of the British Empire. Things were now beginning to settle down in South Africa, and this Inquiry would, he feared, tend once more to revive bitter memories and angry feelings between the different races and interests in that country. At the same time he did not for a moment complain of her Majesty's Government for the course they had taken. They were no doubt, honourably bound by their understanding with the Leader of the Opposition. It was said that the right hon. Gentleman claimed the fulfilment of their promise, and that they feel themselves committed to him. But much had happened since then, and he should have hoped that the Government might have left the decision to the judgment of the House. It was a difficult question of political ethics, and he appreciated the chivalrous spirit which made the Government feel bound to press the Motion. But the House of Commons had a duty to the country and the Empire. They had to consider whether this Committee would do good or harm, and to vote according to their consciences. They had some years ago a somewhat similar case. In 1884, Mr. Gladstone had promised a discussion on Egyptian affairs. On June 30, the right hon. Gentleman proposed to redeem his pledge, but he was opposed by Mr. Forster and the present First Lord of the Admiralty on the ground that circumstances had changed, and that a discussion had become undesirable. The present First Lord of the Admiralty said :—

> "I freely admit that the Government were bound to give a day for discussion when they were challenged by the Opposition . . . . but I claim this, that the House of Commons at large is entitled to disregard these considerations, and that we have simply to look at what is most for the interests of the country."

As to any imputations on the Government, the Colonial Office, or his right hon. Friend the Secretary for the Colonies, they could afford to treat them with scorn. [*Cheers.*] There had, of course, been nothing but dark innuendoes and vague suggestions, and these would in any case continue to be made. As to foreign opinion, those whose confidence was worth having, those who looked fairly at the circumstances, knew quite well that in difficult circumstances Her Majesty's Government had acted loyally and in good faith towards the Transvaal. There were, unfortunately, some foreign papers, even in Germany, allied to us as she was in blood and in her real interests, justly called the Reptile Press, which lost no opportunity of traducing and misrepresenting this country. They would probably continue to do so whatever we might do. As regarded the Chartered Company, he had no interest in the Company and was not connected with it, but he believed that no evidence would be forthcoming which would in any way implicate them. At the same time he confessed he regretted that at a crisis of great difficulty, when their full attention was required to deal with the grave situation arising from the rinderpest and the native rebellions, they should be distracted, and some of their ablest administrators should be dragged from their natural places at the post of danger to resist an attack from the rear, and to take part in a mischievous, though academic, Inquiry. They were invited to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the raid. But in that case they must investigate the refusal of political rights, the system of taxation, the system of monopolies, the impediments of commerce, from which the Uitlanders alleged that they so grievously suffered, and which, in their opinion, were so unfair and oppressive as to have driven them to rebellion. What good could possibly come now from this Inquiry? Were we to consider the complaints of the Boers and take no account of the grievances of the Uitlanders? The possible harm was clear enough; it stared us in the face; it might stir up hatred between the different races in South Africa; it might endanger our relations with foreign Powers; it might paralyse, and would certainly injure, the trade and industries of South Africa—and for what? No one had yet pointed out any good that could possibly result. ["Hear, hear"!] Those responsible for the raid had been punished. The Cape Parliament had made an Inquiry and published a report. They had not thought it necessary to do more; why should we? ["Hear, hear!"] Our policy should be to let bygones be bygones—[*cheers*]—to endeavour to promote peace and goodwill between the different races in South Africa. This Inquiry would, he feared, relight the slumbering embers of race jealousies and personal animosities. To press for it just now, when angry feelings were beginning to subside, but when difficulties with the native races were acute and threatening, seemed, he did not say unpatriotic, for that would imply a sinister intention, which he was sure did not exist, but most unwise. If the Inquiry led to new troubles and complications, they would at least feel that they did their duty in endeavouring to prevent it, and they must throw the onus of the responsibility on the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues. [*Cheers.*]

The right hon. Baronet was speaking at Twelve o'clock, when the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES).

Adjourned Debate on Motion for leave to bring in a Bill [21st January] further adjourned till To-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS [MONEY].

Committee thereupon deferred till To-morrow.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS [AID GRANT, Etc.].

Committee thereupon deferred till Monday.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 17th February.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND) ACT (1885) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [26th January] further adjourned till To-morrow.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

MERCHANDISE MARKS.

Ordered, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the effects and operation of the Merchandise Marks Act 1887, and into the subject of Merchandise Marks generally.—*(Sir Albert Rollit.)*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS.

Bill to amend the Law as to qualifications for elections to Parish Councils and as to the annual assembly of the parish meeting, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Luttrell and Sir John Dorington; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second Time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[No. 100.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House,

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT asked the Leader of the House what steps he proposed to take with reference to the Debate on the British South Africa Committee, and also what would be done with regard to the Motion that originally stood first relating to Committee of Supply?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Of course our original plan was to pass the Resolution in regard to Supply and that relating to the South Africa Committee to-night, and there would have been ample time for both these discussions and other business, too, had it not been for the Debate on the Adjournment of the House. That Debate has occupied practically the whole evening, and under these circumstances the Government feel themselves obliged to ask for to-morrow for the continuation of the discussion of both Resolutions. If that is done without objection we shall be able to proceed on Monday with the Education Resolution.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Which shall we take first?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: We shall proceed first with the Debate on the South Africa Committee.

Dr. TANNER: Will the right hon. Gentleman go on with Supply to-morrow?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: There will be some Supplementary Estimates, if we reach them.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 29th January 1897.

QUESTIONS.

CONGO RAILWAY (NATIVE LABOUR).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to his statements in the House on 12th March and 16th July 1896, whether in or about September last, nearly 1,000 natives were recruited at the Gambia and about 150 at Sierra Leone, to be employed as labourers on the Congo Railway, and conveyed by the *Leopoldville* to Matadi; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government sanctioned this arrangement; and whether he can tell the House the number of natives whom Baron Dhanis was allowed, earlier in the year, to recruit as soldiers for service in his expedition into the north-eastern interior of the Congo Free State?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): After careful inquiry, I satisfied myself that the men employed by the Congo Railway Company are well treated, and the Governors of the West African colonies were authorised to allow men to be engaged for that purpose. The number of men engaged by Baron Dhanis was 350. I may add that since I came into the House, I have received the copy of a Dispatch from Consul Pickersgill, who has been along this line of railway, and in communication with the natives employed. The latter he found thoroughly contented, happy, and well treated.

HEALTH OF TROOPS (UNITED KINGDOM).

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what number of cases of venereal disease of all kinds were under treatment on 31st December 1896, respectively in the Aldershot, Portsmouth, Woolwich, and Irish commands, in military hospitals or elsewhere, and what proportion does this give to the total strength of the troops in the above garrisons?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): On the 1st January 1897, the men under treatment for venereal disease at the several stations were 155 at Aldershot, 77 at Portsmouth, 84 at Woolwich, and 169 in Ireland. These gave the following rates respectively per 1,000 of the strength—12·13, 18·06, 16·79, and 8·93, with an average of 11·84 per 1,000.

MAJOR RASCH inquired if the Government intended to take any steps to remedy this state of things.

MR. BRODRICK said that the whole question, as related to India, was under inquiry by a Departmental Committee of the India Office, and no decision with regard to any steps could be taken until the results of that inquiry were laid before Parliament.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY (POLICE PROTECTION).

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any steps have been taken to increase the number of police stationed at the National Portrait Gallery, in view of the increasing number of visitors, and the damage done to pictures during last summer?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): I informed the noble Lord, in reply to his Question of August 13th last, that there were then in attendance at the Gallery ten curators and three constables. Two more constables have now been added, so that the total number of attendants during the day is now 15, in addition to a head porter, a head messenger, and nine pensioner messengers. The attendance of the public shows no increase. Indeed it has gradually fallen from 49,000 when the Gallery was first opened in April 1896, to 12,000 in December—the last complete month. As regards other means of preventing damage, I may say that the Treasury have agreed to ask Parliament to provide funds during the next two years for glazing the portraits which are immediately within reach of the public.

PARCEL POST CHARGES.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why the rate of postage on a parcel sent from Malta to Gibraltar is 7d. per pound, so that a parcel weighing five pounds would be charged 2s. 11d., whereas a parcel weighing five pounds can be sent from Malta, past Gibraltar, to Edinburgh, Dublin, or elsewhere in the United Kingdom (or *vice versa*, from the United Kingdom to Malta) at a charge of 2s., namely 8d. for the first and 4d. for each additional pound; and, whether he will use his influence to secure a reduction of the rate from Malta to Gibraltar to that from Malta to the United Kingdom?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General does not know the reasons of the Government of Malta for maintaining the scale mentioned. He will, however, make inquiry on the subject; but until he knows what the views of the Colonial Government are, he cannot pledge himself to try to influence them. I must, however, warn my hon. Friend that would be equally valid against the measure advocated by the hon. Member for establishing Imperial penny postage; for, if that were done, a letter sent through Italy to Malta would cost the sender 1d., while a letter sent by the same mail only as far as Italy would cost him 2½d.

BOOK POST CHARGES.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, (1) will he explain why it is that an author or publisher, on sending gratis, in accordance with Law, a copy of a newly published book to the British Museum Library, is required to pay postage upon such book, and that in default of pre-payment a fine of double the deficient postage is levied by the Post Office upon the copyright office of the British Museum; (2) whether he has been informed that authors and publishers resent the obligation to supplement the compulsory contribution of the books to the national library by paying postage, and that some of them on principle refuse to pay such postage and challenge proceedings to enforce it; and (3) whether, seeing that the privilege of free postage is conceded in the case of parcels forwarded to the South Kensington Museum, the Public Record Office, the Royal College of Science, the Royal College of Art, and similar institutions, he will recommend that authors and publishers shall only be required to convey their books properly addressed to the nearest post office?

Mr. HANBURY: The question raised by the hon. Member has been repeatedly considered by various Governments. The Law 5 and 6 Vict., cap. 45, has thrown upon publishers the duty of delivering their publications at the British Museum and at other Libraries besides—the Bodleian at Oxford, the Public Library at Cambridge, that of the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh, and Trinity College, Dublin. There seems to be no reason for relieving publishers of the duty by throwing the burden of delivery on the State. The deficient postage is apparently readily recovered by the British Museum, whose estimate for postage is only £200, and that for their law charges £20. The amount of such postal matter is very small, most of such publications being sent by other agencies, and amounting to about one ton a day. The Postmaster General has no such information as is suggested in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's question. The argument derived from the intention of the Copyright Act does not, of course, apply to the other institutions mentioned by the hon. Member.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland can he indicate the districts to provide railway accommodation in which it is proposed to allocate any of the money voted last Session; and has he been able to include in this allocation any of the districts of the county Cavan which petitioned for railway facilities to develop local trade?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I do not think it would be expedient at the present moment to make any general announcement regarding the manner it is intended to allocate the moneys provided by the Railways (Ireland) Act of last year. I cannot however, hold out any hopes that lines in the County Cavan will be included in the allocation.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the sum of £600 is annually levied off the cesspayers of the County Cavan for the line from Crossdoney to Killeshandia by presentment of the Grand Jury, and against the will of the great majority of the cesspayers; and does he propose in cases of this sort to utilise any of the money voted by Parliament last Session for the relief of congested districts, by the building of railways in Ireland to relieve the people of such taxation?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: This line is part of the Midland Great Western system, and is worked by that company under the Act of 1881, 44th and 45th Vict., cap 97. I am aware that certain baronies in the county have guaranteed to pay to the company the sum of £600 annually towards the construction and maintenance of the line for a period of 35 years from its opening. The money provided for the construction of light railways and for other purposes by the Act of last Session could not be legally applied in relief of taxation in respect of railways already constructed.

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is prepared favourably to consider the two memorials which have been presented to the Irish Lights Board by the lightship men asking for an increase of wages, and also for an increase of pension from £25 per annum to £40 a year, similar to the amount granted to the men in Her Majesty's Navy, as the rules and discipline are almost alike?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): No memorial on the subject has been received by the Board of Trade since 1891. I will carefully consider any further memorials which may be sent to the Board of Trade, together with any recommendations or observations of the Irish Lights Commissioners by which they may be accompanied.

LAND TAX.

Mr. ARTHUR JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Land Tax is this year being levied on the assessment of the annual value of lands and hereditaments under Schedule A (without any deduction such as is allowed for income tax purposes), instead of on the rateable value of property as hitherto; that an increased amount of Land Tax has in many cases been levied in consequence of this new procedure; and that Land Tax has this year been demanded on certain lands which have hitherto been considered to have been exempt from the tax; and whether he will consider the desirability of instructing the Land Tax Collectors not to alter the basis of assessment on which the tax has hitherto been collected?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.): It is impossible for me to make any general statement as to the basis on which the various local bodies of Land Tax Commissioners throughout the country, with whom the matter rests, and over whom I have no authority whatever, have made the assessments for the current year. The Land Tax is raised by a fixed *quota* on each parish, which *quota*, under the Act of last Session, can in no case exceed 1s. in the pound on the total assessment to Schedule A of the lands in the parish liable to Land Tax; and this *quota* is unaffected by any change in the method of assessing the various properties in the parish liable to the Tax as between each other. The power of deciding when a new assessment should be made, as between the various properties in a parish liable to the tax, rests with the Commissioners of Land Tax in each district; and when a new assessment is made, it is quite possible that there may be changes in the incidence of the tax on the various properties in the parish, corresponding to changes in their relative values. It is possible also that in some cases property may be brought into charge which, though liable, has hitherto escaped assessment. But, as the total charge on any parish cannot be increased (though, under the Act of last Session, it may be largely diminished), it follows that an increase of the tax on some properties in a parish must be balanced by a corresponding decrease on others. The Act of last Session did not require any alteration of the basis of assessment on which the tax has hitherto been collected.

TREASURY LOANS (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury will he explain why, when the Corporation of Sligo expressed a desire to pay off, at the rate of 20s. in the pound, all loans contracted by them with the Board of Works, the Treasury refused to accept 20s. in the pound for the outstanding principal of the loans, the Corporation in consequence being unable to accept offers made to them from private sources of loans at a much cheaper rate than that charged by the Treasury; and will he consider the advisability of relieving heavily-taxed public bodies in Ireland by reducing the present rates of interest charged by the Treasury on loans, or by accepting on behalf of the Treasury the repayment of such loans at par?

MR. HANBURY: From the correspondence which took place on this subject last year the hon. Member must, I think, understand that, so long as the market price of Local Loans stock is considerably above par as at present, the solvency of the Local Loans Fund might be seriously affected by premature repayments of Local Loans at par only; and as I then explained, if the Government lends money on condition that it is to be repaid in a given number of years, it is obviously justified in refusing prepayment unless there was a specific stipulation that the loan might be repaid earlier. As regards the question of reducing the rates of interest on Local Loans generally, I can only refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a question put by the hon. Member for North Louth on the 22nd instant.

NEWRY BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) will he explain why the Local Government Board has issued a writ against the Newry Board of Guardians for £21. 6s., paid by the Board to Mr. M'Govern, Cavan, for treatment of four persons bitten by a rabid dog in the Newry Union; (2) is he aware that in Ulster and Connaught there is an almost universal belief in the efficacy of M'Govern's cure of hydrophobia, and that clergymen and magistrates of all denominations have publicly proclaimed their belief in it; and (3) will he instruct the Local Government Board to leave Boards of Guardians free to exercise their own discretion in cases of this kind?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: In answer to a Question put to me yesterday by the hon. Member for West Cavan, I stated fully the circumstances under which legal proceedings have been taken by the Local Government Board in this matter. I have no information as to the statements in the second paragraph, and as regards the suggestion at the end of the Question I must again point out that the Local Government Board are advised that M'Govern's house is not a hospital within the meaning of the 7th Section of the 25 & 26 Vict., cap. 83, as it is not an institution under the professional control and management of duly qualified medical practitioners in which the treatment is openly avowed and subject to proper investigation. The Local Government Board do not interfere with the discretion of Boards of Guardians as regards the selection of the hospital to which the inmates should be sent for special treatment so long as the terms of the Statute are complied with.

ARMY CONTRACTS (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that tenders for Army contracts at Athlone, Birr, Boyle, Carlow, Castlebar, Dublin, Galway,. Killbride Camp, Longford, Maryborough, Mullingar, Naas, Navan, Sligo and Wicklow, were called for on 18th November 1896. Is he aware that advertisements calling for tenders were inserted in Dublin papers but not in any local papers; and, will he instruct the persons responsible for the issue of such advertisements to have them in future inserted in local papers circulating at the stations named?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The selection of newspapers in which to advertise local contracts is left to the discretion of the General Officer Commanding the district, who in the case referred to thought it right to advertise in Dublin papers only. The Secretary of State does not consider it desirable to interfere in the matter, as the officer on the spot is most likely to be able to judge accurately of the necessities of each case.

TRAINING SHIP (BELFAST LOUGH).

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, considering the large seafaring population living on the coast of Antrim and Down, he will now see that a training ship is placed in Belfast Lough?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): As at present advised, the Admiralty does not propose to increase the number of stationary training ships.

RAILWAY MAPS.

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has received any answer to the communications which he addressed to the Railway Companies Association, prior to the 26th July last, with reference to the withdrawal from circulation by the Clearing House Committee of Airey's sectional railway maps; and whether he has considered the desirability of the Board of Trade or some other Government Department undertaking the preparation and sale for public use of maps giving the distances in an authentic form along the lines of railway in the United Kingdom for the use of traders?

MR. RITCHIE: I regret that the correspondence with the Railway Companies Association has not led to any satisfactory result. The Association hold that the question of the publication of these maps is one for the consideration of the Committee of the Railway Clearing House. I cannot hold out any hopes that the Government will undertake the preparation of such maps.

ROYAL CANAL (IRELAND).

MR. JAMES TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the persistent neglect of the Midland Great Western Railway Company of Ireland to carry out the recommendations of the Board of Trade with reference to the Royal Canal, he will sanction the application of whatever portion of the fund reserved under Sections 33 to 35 of 58 Geo. III. as may be necessary for the carrying out of the necessary repairs of the canal?

MR. HANBURY: All the requirements of General Hutchinson and Major Marindin have (with the exception of warehouse accommodation) either been carried out or are in hand or arranged for. The maintenance reports of the engineers of the Midland Railway on the Royal Canal up to the 31st ultimo mark satisfactory progress towards the fulfilment of the Board of Trade recommendation. There does not seem at present any necessity to put in force the powers of the Board of Control.

TELEGRAPH FACILITIES (LIMERICK CITY).

MR. F. A. O'KEEFFE, (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if, to consult the convenience of the citizens of Limerick, he will, in accordance with a numerously signed memorial, direct that a telegraph station be opened at the William Street Post Office in Limerick?

MR. HANBURY: No recent memorial for the opening of a telegraph office at the William Street Post Office in Limerick has been received by the Postmaster General. The question has, however, from time to time received very careful consideration, and the circumstances do not appear to have changed since the answer given to a question of the hon. Member in the last Parliament on the 5th September, 1893, when he was informed that, as there were already two telegraph offices within a short distance of the William Street Post Office, the application could not be favourably entertained.

ROYAL ENGINEERS (CIVILIAN CLERK).

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that the Officer commanding the Royal Engineers of the North Eastern District at York, referring on 6th January 1896, to the death of Mr. James Ore Marshall, described him as a gentleman who had served his country for upwards of 40 years, and by his zeal and experience in the performance of his duties, as well as by his upright bearing and conduct, contributed very largely to the credit and efficiency of the Royal Engineer Service, the Secretary of State for War would advise Her Majesty to grant an allowance to his widow and children, who are in poor circumstances?

MR. BRODRICK: Mr. Marshall was a civilian clerk in the Royal Engineer Department, and there is no regulation under which an allowance can be granted to a widow or children of a civilian.

UNDER SHERIFFS (IRELAND).

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has considered the case of the under sheriffs in Ireland; and, if so, whether it is the intention of the Government during the present Session to deal with the subject?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot give a promise to deal with the subject in the present Session, but the matter is under consideration.

ROYAL BARRACKS DUBLIN.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the printed evidence of the Inquiry held in 1893 regarding the reconstruction of the Royal Barracks, Dublin?

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: On the 25th February 1896 I explained, in reply to the hon. Member, that although the whole case of the Royal Barracks had been made the subject of careful investigation, it had not been deemed necessary to hold any special Inquiry. There is no evidence therefore to lay before the House.

SLIGO UNION.

MR. BERNARD COLLERY (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether an instalment of seed loan amounting to £1,000 odd becoming due by the Sligo Union, and payment being unavoidably delayed for about three months, a sum of £53. 10s. was exacted by the Treasury, and paid by the guardians after remonstrance; (2) whether this sum was charged as interest for the overdue time; and, if so, at what rate; (3) and, if a similar rate is charged on loans of this kind in England?

MR. HANBURY: The answer to the first paragraph is Yes. The answer to the 2nd paragraph is No. The sum in question represents not interest but Receiver's Fees which are charged in all cases where instalments are not paid within one month of the date when due. The charge was a statutory one, imposed by Section 6 of the Public Works Loans Act 1892. Interest on these loans is payable not by the localities but out of the Irish Church Fund, so if these fees were not enforced, there would be little inducement to the localities to repay the loans. I am not aware that there are any loans of this kind in England.

NIGER DELTA (LIQUOR TRAFFIC.)

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Foreign Office has been called to the need of some other currency than that of gin in the Delta of the Niger, with the view to the ultimate adoption of one less injurious to the natives; whether missionaries and others are now compelled by the character of this intoxicating currency to promote, however unwillingly, the demoralisation of the people which results from this medium of exchange; and whether some steps will be taken to abate the evils resulting from this state of things?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. GEORGE CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): It is not correct to speak of gin as a currency—still less as the sole currency on the Niger. It is one of several articles that are taken in barter by the natives. So far from there being any compulsion, or any willingness to promote the demoralisation of the people, the tax upon gin has been lately doubled, and now stands at 2s. a gallon in the Niger Coast Protectorate, whilst it is heavily taxed in the portions of the Delta administered by the Niger Company, and is altogether prohibited in their inland territories. The danger of prohibitive taxation is, that the trade is then taken up by neighbouring countries, among whom France and Germany do not appear to share our view as to the desirability of increased duties, and that smuggling is fostered on a large scale.

STATUTORY TERM APPLICATIONS (IRELAND).

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what is the number of applications now pending in the Court of the Land Commission and County Courts in Ireland, respectively: to fix first statutory terms; to fix second statutory terms; under Redemption of Rent Acts; and also the number of appeals pending in each of the foregoing class of cases?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed by the Land Commission that the preparation of a return containing the desired information would occupy a very considerable time, and it is suggested that a reference may usefully be made to the return of proceedings up to the end of November last, which has been presented to Parliament. The similar return to December will be presented in the course of a few days.

OIL LAMP ACCIDENTS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the numerous fatal accidents occasioned by the incautious use of cheap oil lamps and, whether he will consider the desirability of taking steps to secure some system of inspection and registration of oil lamps for the protection of the public?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I am fully alive to the importance of the question which is raised by the hon. Member, and he will remember that it was one of the subjects which the Select Committee of last Session on petroleum was considering. That Committee will, I hope, be reappointed shortly and conclude their labours at an early date.

DUBLIN PORT AND DOCKS BILL.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether any decision has been arrived at by the Government in respect to the Dublin Port and Docks Bill; and (2) whether he has seen reports of the meetings held regarding its proposals by the merchants of Dublin?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No decision has yet been arrived at by the Government in respect of the Dublin Port and Docks Board Bill. The Government are in communication with the Board of Trade on the subject. I have seen newspaper reports of the meetings referred to in the second paragraph of the Question.

MILL ACCIDENT (BATLEY).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to an accident at Phœnix Mills, Batley, on Friday last, the inquest relating to which was held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, the Factory Inspector for the district not being present, and the Coroner stating that he was unable to get into communication with him; whether it is provided by the law that the inspector should have 24 hours' notice; and, if so, whether the Coroner was justified in the course he took; and whether the Home Office will instruct the inspectors in the heavy woollen district to inquire into the cause of this accident, and into the need for the employment (according to the practice of many firms) of "hangers," where long belts are used?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, my attention, has been called to this case. The action of the Coroner appears to have been irregular; he should either have given the inspector 24 hours' notice, and a telegram to the factory office of the district would have reached the inspector in charge at once, or, in default of such notice, have adjourned the inquest. I am making further inquiries into the particulars of the accident, and the means of prevention that may be required.

COLLISIONS AT SEA (NEW REGULATIONS).

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the new regulations for preventing collisions at sea, ordered by Order in Council to come into operation on 1st July next, have been submitted to and agreed to by all the Powers represented at the Washington Conference of 1889; and, if not, which Powers have failed or refused to agree to them; whether he is aware that the Merchant Service Guild, a representative body of merchant captains and officers in active service, have made a public protest against the enforcement of these new regulations as being calculated to lead to disasters; whether he has received any communications to this or to similar effect, either from the Merchant Shipping Guild, or from other bodies or persons connected with seafaring; and whether he proposes to take any notice of or any action with reference to the representations made against the new rules as being calculated to add to the dangers of the seas?

Mr. RITCHIE: The regulations referred to by my hon. Friend have been submitted to all the Powers represented at the Washington Conference of 1889. All have agreed to them except one Power, from which no reply has yet been received, viz., Venezuela. I am quite aware of the attitude of the Merchant Service Guild on this question, and I have received communications from that and some other bodies to the effect stated in the Question, but having regard to the exhaustive manner in which this question has been discussed and considered, I am not prepared to depart in any way from the position taken up by Her Majesty's Government with the concurrence of the other Powers.

CRETE.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the papers promised respecting the affairs of Crete will be in the hands of Members?

Mr. CURZON: The Blue-book in question is a very bulky one, and delay has arisen from the necessities of translation and of reference to so many quarters prior to publication. I hope its appearance will not now be much longer delayed.

ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the rule which prevents candidates for the Army Medical Staff who have twice failed in the competitive examination again presenting themselves for examination has been or is to be set aside; and, if so, how many trials a candidate is to be allowed?

Mr. BRODRICK: In future, on the recommendation of the medical authorities, three trials will be allowed.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY BUILDINGS.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether arrangements will be made in the Estimates to provide for the cleaning and restoration of the Edinburgh University Library buildings, which have not been cleaned for upwards of thirty years, and which are admitted by the University Court to be in a condition urgently requiring the expenditure of money?

Mr. HANBURY: No, Sir. Under the Act 52 & 53 Vict., cap. 55, the Scottish Universities receive an annual grant of £42,000 in full discharge of all claims on public funds. The hon. Member should, therefore, address himself to the University authorities, with whom the expenditure of Edinburgh's share rests.

LEE-METFORD RIFLE (ROYAL MARINES).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state whether the Lee-Metford rifle has been issued to the Royal Marines; if so, will he state whether the issue has been confined to Mark II.; and, if Mark I.* has been issued, will he say to what extent?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first two questions is in the affirmative. There are a few of the Mark I. and Mark I.* rifles at Eastney and the depôt, which are solely for drill purposes.

HOLYROOD PALACE.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is now in a position to state that the fee charged for admission to Holyrood Palace will be abolished; and if so, when?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): In reply to the hon. Member's Question, I have to inform him that this subject is at present under consideration; but I have every hope to be in a position to make a definite statement when the Estimates are under discussion.

RAILWAY RATES (IRELAND).

Mr. TUITE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Midland Great Western Railway Company of Ireland have recently reduced their rates on coal, bran, oil cake, flour, oats, seeds, and manure in bags, to Mullingar to a competition rate with the rate on the Royal Canal, which runs alongside their system to that town, to the detriment of the bye traders on the canal; and whether, as the Canal is the property of the Railway Company, the Board of Trade will take steps to put in force Section 38 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, which makes it illegal for railway companies to charge competition rates in such cases?

Mr. RITCHIE: If an application is made by any person interested in the traffic of the Canal, the Board of Trade well be happy to consider it under Subsection 3 of the Section referred to in the Question, with a view to putting the trader in a position to carry his complaint to the Railway and Canal Commissioners.

PROTECTION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS (IRELAND).

Mr. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if, referring to the Report of the Irish Board of Works dated 1895-6, he will state what progress has been made to place Clare Abbey, Ennis, county Clare, and Canon Island, River Shannon, under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments Protection (Ireland) Acts, 1882 to 1892?

Mr. HANBURY: Clare Abbey was vested in the Board of Works in December 1896, and works of preservation are under consideration. Canon Island has not been yet vested in the Board, but negotiations with the owner are proceeding.

AGRICULTURAL EXPENDITURE (IRELAND).

Mr. C. J. ENGLEDOW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he would grant a Return, giving, with details, the total amount expended in Ireland on the various heads which in England are dealt with by the Board of Agriculture?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It would be extremely difficult to give with accuracy in the form of a Return the total amount expended in Ireland on agricultural work, inasmuch as the functions which in England are discharged by the Board of Agriculture, are in Ireland distributed over a number of Departments, and the administrative and other expenses properly chargeable in each case under the head of "agriculture" could not be stated. If, however, the hon. Member will be content with an approximate statement of the expenditure of public money on objects connected with agriculture by the various Departments concerned in Ireland, the following figures may be sufficient for his purpose, namely:—By the Agricultural Department of the Land Commission, £1,000, exclusive of the salaries of the clerical staff; by the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, a sum of £15,000, representing a grant in aid of the cattle pleuro-pneumonia accounts, in addition to £12,164, the salaries and expenses of the Department; by the Registrar-General's Office, £2,083; by the agricultural establishments of the Board of National Education, £11,288; by the Congested Districts Board, £14,312, exclusive of the general administrative expenses of the Board amounting to £5,944; by the Public Works Office, £8,150; total expenditure £69,941. The figures quoted are in respect of the current financial year, except in the case of the expenditure of £14,312 by the Congested Districts Board, which is for the year ended 31st March 1895.

TURKISH LOANS.

MR. PHILIP STANHOPE (Burnley): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the statements recently current with respect to the financial schemes of the Imperial Ottoman Bank for raising a new Turkish Loan, and the reported proposal of a guarantee in connection therewith by the European Powers; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will give an assurance that it will not undertake any further financial guarantee or liability whatever for the Government of the Sultan of Turkey?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The matter has not yet come before Her Majesty's Government in an official shape. If it should do so it must be considered by them in concert with the Governments of the other Great Powers. They cannot, therefore, at present express any opinion or give any assurance with regard to the matter.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE, (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can arrange to take the Debate on the Financial Relations between England and Ireland in the second week in March.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Government are, and have been, very anxious to give facilities for an early discussion of this important question. They fully recognise that the Irish Members have a special claim in the matter, and a right to be considered in fixing the date for the Debate. The Government are prepared, without pledging themselves to any particular day, to meet their views as far as is consistent with the exigencies of Government business. ("Hear, hear!")

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Secretary for the Colonies whether he could now state what steps were being taken to enable the Colonies and dependencies of our Empire to take official part in the celebration of the completion of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no doubt that this Question of the hon. Member is founded on a statement in the *Daily Mail* this morning, which is not quite accurate, and I think a little premature, since I have learned by experience it is desirable to postpone announcement of invitations until I can at the same time say that they have been finally answered. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] But as it has come from the Colonies I may now state that with the approval of Her Majesty I have, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, invited the Premiers of all self-governing Colonies to come to this country to take part in the celebration of the completion of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign. ["Hear, hear!"] I have also informed them that if they accept this invitation, Her Majesty's Government desire that they shall be treated as guests of this country. [*Cheers.*] It is also proposed that detachments representing the military forces of the several Colonies shall come to this country, and a similar endeavour will be made to secure representations of military forces from Crown Colonies. ["Hear, hear!"] I may say that up to the present time replies in general terms have been received only from Canada, the Cape and Natal. In every case the replies are extremely gratifying in tone, testifying to the loyalty of the Colonies and their desire to take part in this celebration. [*Cheers.*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) moved:—

> "That Standing Order 11 be suspended and the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to the sitting of the House this day."

In moving this Resolution he hardly thought that any explanation was required. The House was aware that on the previous day it had been proposed to take certain Government business, it being a day allotted by the Rules of the House for the purpose. But, in the exercise of their undoubted right, hon. Gentlemen opposite initiated a Debate which lasted to within an hour of midnight, the ordinary time for suspension of business. Practically, therefore, the whole of the Government time was taken up with a matter which had nothing to do with the ordinary progress of Government business. The Government, therefore, thought themselves justified in asking the House to afford them this privilege with regard to the business for the day, and the proposal would not operate to the prejudice of private Members, inasmuch as—Friday being allocated as a rule to Motions on the order for the Speaker's leaving the chair—he believed there were no Motions down in the name of any private Member. Under the circumstances he hoped the House would agree, without prolonged Debate, to the Motion he now made.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th January],

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to nquire into the origin and circumstances of he incursion into the South African Republic y an armed force, and into the administration f the British South Africa Company, and to eport thereon, and further to report what lterations are desirable in the government of he territories under the control of the Com-any.
>
> "That the Committee have leave to hear ounsel to such an extent as they shall see fit, nd have power to send for persons, papers, nd records."—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Question again proposed:—Debate esumed.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after he word "That," to leave out to the nd of the Question, in order to add the ords

> in view of the peaceful settlement of affairs the Chartered Company's territories, the unishment of all persons connected with the raid into the Transvaal, and the inexpediency, in the interests of all South Africa, of re-opening questions which have now been disposed of, this House thinks it unnecessary to reappoint the Select Committee of 1896."—(*Mr. Maclean.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.) who on rising was received with cheers, said: I rise at once, for I understand from my right hon. Friend (Sir J. Lubbock) that he has concluded the speech he was making when the House rose last night. My right hon. Friend and the Mover of the Amendment have made an appeal to the Government to treat this Resolution which they have proposed as an open question—to leave it to the House to decide whether or no this further inquiry shall be made. Well, Sir, I may say at once that is an unusual request—I will not say an unprecedented request; but the circumstances of the case are not such as enable me to comply with it. ["Hear, hear!"] I am glad to know from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, as well as from the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Amendment, that the objects on all sides of the House are the same in reference to this matter, and that it is the desire of all sections of the House to do everything in their power to allay the feeling of race animosity in South Africa, and to promote those good relations between the Dutch and English there without which the peace and prosperity of the country are absolutely impossible. Now, that is my policy, that has been my policy, and that will be my policy consistently so long as I have the honour to hold my present office. ["Hear, hear!"] I have patiently pursued it, not without being subject from time to time to some misunderstanding. If my conduct has not always appeared to be absolutely consistent to some of my hon. Friends, it has not been because my lines of policy have changed, it has only been because, from the nature of the circumstances, I have not always been able to pursue that policy exactly by the same means. ["Hear, hear!"] But my policy, and the policy anyone in my position must put forward, has for its primary object to remove causes of disagreement between the Dutch and English inhabitants of South Africa. The mover of the Amendment said he was actuated by the same desire; but I must honestly say that I do not think he was fortunate in the manner in which he proceeded to accomplish his desire. I have no doubt it was entirely unintentional, but he did contrive to put his finger on every sore spot in connection with this controversy, and I am afraid that speeches of this kind will do more to promote than to allay the irritation we all deplore. The hon. Gentleman no doubt is a harbinger of peace, but at the same time I do think that upon reflection he himself will be convinced that the precise way he took to secure peace was not exactly the most discreet. ["Hear!"] I make no complaint whatever of the speech of my right hon. Friend who seconded the Amendment, who spoke with great moderation and evident sincerity on the subject. I will go further and say that I sympathise not only with his motive in bringing forward the Amendment, but I agree with many of the arguments he used. The House is perfectly well aware that the position of affairs in South Africa is still unsatisfactory. In dealing with matters at this juncture I am myself in a difficult position, and I am sure the House will show me every consideration. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not altogether disinterested. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment referred to rumours current during the last few months with regard to my action and policy previous to the raid. I cannot ignore these rumours, and if there be any person in or out of the House who believes that I knew of the intended raid or was cognisant of that raid beforehand, or that I did not take every step in my power to prevent the raid and to turn it back after it commenced—if there be any such person, then I have above all persons in the House the most reason to desire inquiry. ["Hear, hear!"] But I endeavour to put aside all personal considerations, and must then say to the House in my position as Colonial Secretary that undoubtedly the situation in South Africa at the present time gives cause for considerable anxiety. ["Hear, hear!"] Disquieting reports reach me every day, and I do not know how to distinguish in every case between baseless rumours and actual truth with solid foundation, but undoubtedly there has been within the last few months a recrudescence of that unrestfulness which it must be the desire of all of us, if possible, to allay. ["Hear, hear!"] The situation has not been improved by recent legislation of the Transvaal Government, and there is no doubt that provisions in some of that legislation are contrary to the Convention of London, and if that legislation is enforced, undoubtedly a situation will be created which will require all our prudence, all our impartiality, and all our patience. ["Hear, hear!"] Then, again, there is the question of reforms which have been asked for on behalf of the Uitlander population. The President has again and again promised to give full and favourable consideration to requests, to suggestions which may be made, to friendly representations, I should say, made by Her Majesty's Government in regard to the population in the Transvaal. These friendly representations from Her Majesty's Government have not been wanting. These respectful requests from the majority of the Uitlander population, who pay nineteen-twentieths of the taxation—[*cheers*]—and who have no substantial representation whatsoever—["hear, hear"]—have also not been wanting. But up to the present time the response of President Kruger and of the Transvaal Government has, to say the least of it, been inadequate. Reforms have been proposed and carried in the last session of the Raad, as to which I have asked Mr. Conyngham Greene, our very able Agent at Pretoria, to furnish me with a full report as soon as he himself is in a position to do so. But in the meantime, there is no doubt that they go only a little way to satisfy what I believe every impartial man in any civilised and constitutional State would admit to be the legitimate requests on behalf of the majority of the population. [*Cheers.*] I do not recall, I do not withdraw, anything I have ever said with regard to this matter. The hon. Member who moved this Resolution referred to the Dispatch which I addressed to President Kruger immediately after the raid, and he said that since then I have been overborne by the timid counsels of Sir Hercules Robinson. Of course I take full responsibility for everything that is being done or said by Lord Rosmead—

[*Opposition cheers*]—so long as he remains the Governor of the Cape and the High Commissioner of Her Majesty in South Africa. I do not attempt for a moment to get rid of that responsibility, but I say for him and for myself that we have no reason to withdraw the statement which I made to President Kruger that there would be no security for peace and for the good relations between the races in the Transvaal until some consideration had been shown and some attempt had been made to redress their grievances. [*Cheers.*] Let me not be understood in saying this to cast blame upon President Kruger. President Kruger has his own difficulties to contend with. ["Hear, hear!"] He is a constitutional ruler; he has his people to deal with, and it is quite possible he has objections to overcome which up to the present time he may have failed to overcome. We can only wish that his hands may be strengthened to carry out the policy to which he has again and again committed himself and as to his sincerity in regard to which I, at all events, have no occasion and no right to comment. While, however, I believe that President Kruger and the great majority even of the Dutch in the Transvaal desire to follow out the policy indicated by the President in that speech which he made, I think, shortly after the munificent subscription which was raised in the Rand for the sufferers by the dynamite explosion, and in which he said his policy was "to heal sores, to forget and to forgive"—I do not doubt that that is the policy of the majority in the Transvaal —it is only too evident that there are extreme sections on both sides—["hear, hear"]—who apparently have an interest, or at all events are willing, to maintain the state of unrest. ["Hear, hear."] These are the circumstances which it is my duty to bring before the House. It is in face of these circumstances upon which my right hon. Friend the Member for the London University has laid stress, that we ask you to proceed with this Inquiry. It is an Inquiry in two branches. It is in the first place to inquire into the origin and the circumstances of the raid. It is in the second place to inquire into the administration of the Chartered Company. As to the second portion of the Inquiry, I do not imagine that there will be any difference of opinion. [*Opposition cheers.*] Undoubtedly a new work, a gigantic work, is being carried on under very difficult and novel circumstances by this great organisation. ["Hear, hear!"] We have had some experience, we have had some knowledge; it is natural we should wish for more. We have come undoubtedly to a critical point, it may be to the turning point, and it is desirable that this House should be in full possession of all the facts with regard to the way in which this company has, up to the present time discharged its liabilities—[*Opposition cheers*]—in order that we may see whether we shall be justified in continuing its authority. ["Hear, hear!"] I am bound to say, and I say it in order that there may be no misapprehension, that, so far as my own official knowledge goes, and having regard to the magnitude and the difficulties of the task, I believe the Chartered Company will be able to make out a very good case for itself, and that the development of this country, which could not be undertaken by the Imperial Government without, at all events, involving continuous and very large demands upon the taxpayers of this country—that that duty has been fulfilled by the Chartered Company with great energy and with great public spirit. [*Cheers.*] But there is no reason whatever, I imagine, why the Chartered Company should fear the Inquiry or why this House should not desire it. As regards the other branch of the Inquiry, no doubt it is a portion of the examination into the affair which requires great care and discretion. The raid is indissolubly connected with the discontent in Johannesburg. The discontent in Johannesburg is founded upon the grievances of the Uitlanders. No inquiry into the origin of the raid would therefore be complete —it would be a sham—unless it went carefully into this question of grievances —[*cheers*]—and unless it determined how far those grievances afforded a justification for that discontent and agitation in Johannesburg which, as I have said, made the raid possible. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, I say again that an inquiry of that kind is a delicate and a difficult inquiry, and I think that it will require great care upon our part and upon the part of the Committee so to conduct it as not to re-open old sores. I think my right hon. Friend will admit that at all events I appreciate the difficulties in the way, the pitfalls in the path, to which he himself has so well called attention. But in spite of that I think it necessary, on behalf of the Government, to press for the appointment of this Committee. It is quite true that no promise was given either to President Kruger or, so far as I know, to any outsider in this matter. The promise was made to the House of Commons—["hear, hear!"]—and when a promise is made to the House of Commons it does not mean to one side, but to both sides of the House and to the general opinion of the House as a whole, and the Government could not without failing in honour retire from a promise so given unless it were relieved by the general wish of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] I have pointed out that the Committee will have before them a task of great difficulty, but I have confidence in a Committee of the House of Commons. I believe it will be equal to this difficult task. ["Hear, hear!"] It will know that it has to shield great national interests, and it will know how to subordinate personal prejudices to those higher and patriotic considerations. Although the House will be placing a great responsibility upon its shoulders, I believe that it will show itself quite able to deal with it in a manner satisfactory to the country, and that this Inquiry may therefore result in securing that object which we all have at heart—that is, allaying, and not increasing, the animosity which may at the present time prevail. [*Cheers.*] Before I sit down there is only one point on which I wish to say a word; that is with regard to the composition of the Committee. The Government have been anxious that this Committee should not be a large one. We think that its deliberations would be shortened and probably improved by its being confined to a limited number of members. But a difficulty has arisen with regard to the representation of the Irish parties on the Committee. Of course we are not responsible for that in any way; we have merely fulfilled our formal Ministerial obligation in accepting the list, which is the true proportion according to numbers, and which has been handed to us in the usual course as the representation of the other side. But it appears that there are certain sections of the Irish Party who consider themselves overlooked in the matter, and all I have to say is that I am so desirous that everyone should, if possible, be satisfied, that if it will conduce to that object the Government will be ready, though they do not recommend it exactly, to accept the proposal to increase the Committee to 17 in order that the Irish may have another representative. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouth, W.): I certainly do not rise for the purpose of criticising or differing from what I will call the prudent and moderate speech made by the Colonial Secretary. My right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London last night attributed to me a part in this transaction which I should have no wish to disclaim if I had any right to it. He really attributed to me the principal part in the moving for the appointment of this Committee. [*Some Ministerial cheers.*] There is, fortunately for me, a much higher authority than I am in this matter. Who is the first person who announced to the world that there was to be a searching inquiry into this matter? The only point in which I differ from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman is his statement that the promise was made to the House of Commons. No, it was not made to the House of Commons. It was an announcement made by the Sovereign of this country to the world at large. In the Speech from the Throne in the year which is just past the Queen, referring to this transaction of the raid, said:—

> "A sudden incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force from the territories under the control of the British South Africa Company resulted in a deplorable collision with the burgher forces. My Ministers at the earliest possible moment intervened to prohibit, through the High Commissioner, this hostile action, and to warn all my subjects throughout South Africa against taking part in aid thereof. The origin and circumstances of these proceedings will form the subject of a searching inquiry."

There is the promise that was made, that there should be an Inquiry into this matter. The hon. Member for Cardiff has asked to whom this promise was given. In the first place, I say it was given by the Sovereign, and not given to the House of Commons alone. It was given, not indeed in the definite terms of a letter or Dispatch, but, in my opinion, and I think in the opinion of the House, it was given to the Government which had suffered from this transaction. [*Cheers.*] What is the situation there described? That an attack upon a friendly Government had been made by forces apparently, on the face of it, under the control of a body representing the British Sovereign. In the Speech from the Throne it was announced that an attack had been made upon a friendly Government by such a force, and that a full and searching inquiry into the origin of that attack should be made. What is the language in which the right hon. Gentleman properly described this transaction? He addressed the Chartered Company in these words:—

> "Mr. Chamberlain desires you to note that the South African Republic is a foreign State with which Her Majesty is at peace and in Treaty relations; and in this connection I desire to remind you that the obligations imposed by the 22nd Article of the Charter of the British South Africa Company to perform and undertake all Treaty obligations of Her Majesty towards any other State."

No one can doubt a violation of those obligations has taken place. In a fuller Dispatch, to which the right hon. Gentleman has very properly referred, he gives this account of the relations of the British Government to the Government of the Transvaal. He says:—

> "Since the Convention of 1884, Her Majesty's Government have recognised the South African Republic as a free and independent Government as regards all its internal affairs not touched by that Convention."

I would not say a single word which should weaken what the right hon. Gentleman has said with reference to his friendly representations in regard to the interests of the Uitlanders at Johannesburg. On the contrary, I should feel that in anything I could say it would be my duty to reinforce the representations which are being made by the right hon. Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] But that is not the question here. What we have to do, if we are going to give force to these friendly representations, is, in the first instance, to place beyond all doubt our own good faith. [*Cheers.*] That is the first and material point. That is the ground of the promise of this full and searching Inquiry which was made by the Queen to this Government, with whom she was in friendly relations and at peace when this outrage was committed. In this Amendment we are called upon to pass, there are some assertions which, I confess, appear to me to be not well founded. The hon. Member for Cardiff says:—"In view of the peaceful settlement of affairs in the Chartered Company's territories" there should be no further action. He seems to think that because the rebellion has been put down the Inquiry should not take place. But at the time the promise of this Inquiry was made there was no disturbance whatever in these territories. ["Hear, hear!"] Then the hon. Member goes on to say that it will reopen questions which have now been disposed of. ["Hear, hear!"] But what questions have now been dispoed of, and how have they been disposed of? Certainly the trial of Dr. Jameson and his companions did not dispose of the questions. It disposed only of the question of the relations of those individuals to these transactions; it did not dispose of the question put forward by the right hon. Gentleman in his first Dispatch—namely, how far other persons and how far the Chartered Company were in any way responsible either for the earlier or the later part of the transactions. Therefore, the Jameson trial has not disposed of the principal part of this Inquiry? Then it is said by the hon. Member for Cardiff that the Inquiry at the Cape had disposed of the matter. The Inquiry at the Cape did not dispose of any question relating to the Chartered Company at all. It did not profess to do so; but, on the contrary, absolutely and carefully excluded it. The Inquiry at the Cape professed to be and was merely an Inquiry into how far the colonial authorities at the Cape were in any degree mixed up with or responsible for this matter, and the finding of that Committee confined itself explicitly to persons in that relation. ["Hear, hear!"] But that is not the question which, according to the Speech from the Throne, we were to inquire into. We were to inquire into the relations of the Empire in these transactions, and in regard to its relations to the other States who might be affected by it. It is, therefore, an entire error to suppose that either of these Inquiries has dealt with, or even touched, the main questions that were to be inquired into. I confess myself I regret the language which the hon. Member for Cardiff used with reference to President Kruger. I do not think it was just language; I am quite sure it was not wise language. ["Hear, hear!"] I believe, as the right hon. Gentleman believes, that the object of President Kruger is to establish and to keep peace between his own people and the subjects of the Queen. ["Hear, hear!"] I believe that his object is not to exasperate but to heal the differences which exist between the two peoples. Are we likely to strengthen his hands, to conciliate his disposition to remove the evils which are complained of, by such language as the hon. Member for Cardiff used in regard to him? ["Hear, hear!"] But, Sir, it is not only with reference to the Government of the Transvaal that I think we are bound to set ourselves clearly in the right. As the right hon. Gentleman has said, and, I think, we on this side of the House have a right to claim, that from the beginning of these transactions we have done nothing to interfere with or make more difficult the very difficult task with which the right hon. Gentleman is charged. [*Cheers.*] We have done nothing that should weaken his hands in the task which he had to-night avowed as his principal object—of reconciling the British and Dutch races in South Africa. [*Cheers.*] I have always considered that is the main object of the policy which ought to be pursued by any Government, of whatever Party, or on whatever side of the House it sits. Then this Inquiry is addressed also to the Dutch population of the whole of South Africa; not only in the independent Governments of the Transvaal and of the Orange Free State, but the Dutch population, whether they be in a minority or majority, in every part of South Africa. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore, what this Committee has to do is to do its best to ascertain what the real facts of the case are, and to give an assurance to the Government in South Africa and to the people in South Africa that the British Government and the British House of Commons desire nothing except to do justice and to deal fairly as between them. ["Hear, hear!"] But I understand that the promise of this Inquiry has a still wider extension. It is intended to give an assurance to the world that this country has the desire and has the resolution to deal fairly with other nations. [*Cheers.*] I have heard language of this kind sometimes: "After all, what does it signify what is done, or by whom it is done, so long as England can derive profit and advantage from it?" Sir, that is language which is used by enemies, and not by friends, of this country. [*Cheers.*] I was very glad to read some words by a Minister of the Crown the other day—I think in relation to this matter, for they followed very soon after some observations he had made upon the extension of the Empire and of Chartered Companies—*e.g.*, I refer to a speech made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Bristol, which he concluded in these words:—

Sir William Harcourt.

> "They would feel that there was one thing more important than money, more important than men, more important than ships, when they dealt with the affairs of such an Empire as ours. It was honour and good faith, that the word of an Englishman should be maintained, and that, when we made a Treaty, we should keep it. [*Cheers.*] It was that our neighbours should know, wherever they were—in Europe, or Africa, or America, or Asia—that the word of an English Government was the bond of England. [*Cheers.*] They might depend upon it that, however great our power and our means, our Empire was maintained more surely than by anything else by honour and good faith."

[*Cheers.*] That was language worthy of an English Minister; and when my right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London says that I pressed upon the Government to keep their pledge as to this Inquiry, I tell him I never thought of dishonouring an English Government by supposing it was possible that, under any circumstances, they could think of retiring from it. [*Cheers.*] It is utterly untrue that I have ever put any pressure on the Government, or thought of doing so. My only object has been to facilitate, as far as possible, the method by which that Inquiry might be most completely and satisfactorily carried out. [*Cheers.*] So far with reference to the first point of the Inquiry—I mean the origin of this raid and its consequences. Of course one of the subjects of the Inquiry must be how far that raid and its consequences have contributed to the recent disturbances in Matabeleland

and Mashonaland. Then there is another branch of the inquiry which is still more important—that is, with reference to the action of the Chartered Company, how far it has fulfilled the duties for which it was constituted, and how far it is to be trusted in the future. Those are inquiries which the House of Commons has always made in connection with organisations of this kind, which have been subsidiary to the central Government. Of course the great example of inquiries of this kind is that of the East India Company, which was the subject of periodical inquiry and revision by the House of Commons. There were great Indian Committees from time to time to consider how far the East India Company was competent, and how far it had fulfilled the great duties which had devolved upon it. No man can doubt that the circumstances of the time demand an inquiry of that kind with reference to the Chartered Company. That is a subject which ought to be gone into. Here is a territory containing a handful of English and some millions of natives. It is, I do not know how many times larger than the United Kingdom, and the company is now in a condition, if I may use the phrase, of disorganisation and revolution, because the right hon. Gentleman has thought it necessary, wisely I believe, to suspend the whole of its military and police authority. That, of course, is only a temporary situation, and it is for the House of Commons Committee to inquire into what shall be the future organisation of the Company. These are grave matters demanding that they should be dealt with with prudence, but also with firmness and courage, and with a desire not to do mischief but good; and I am quite sure that any Committee appointed by the House of Commons will address itself to those duties with a sense of grave responsibility. There is one thing which I have omitted to say. I regretted more than anything yesterday the sentence in which the hon. Member for Cardiff attacked Lord Rosmead. ["Hear, hear!"] I must deprecate the habit of going behind the responsible Ministers of the Crown to attack servants of the Crown who are acting under the authority and direction of their chiefs. I regret deeply that a man who in all that dangerous and difficult situation which arose in the Transvaal and at the Cape just 12 months ago rendered the most eminent services to the cause of peace and the reconciliation of the two races should have been attacked by the hon. Member. He said that he hoped that the policy of Lord Rosmead might be reversed, and I think that was a most unfortunate observation. It is not in that way that the affairs of your country will be well conducted or the interests of the British Crown well served. If the responsible agents of the Crown are to be attacked in this way in the House of Commons, I am quite sure they will always be defended by the responsible Minister, as Lord Rosmead has been defended by the right hon. Gentleman to-night. ["Hear, hear!"] I am extremely anxious not to introduce any controversial matters into this Debate, and I hope I have said nothing tending to cause sentiments of exasperation. I have only desired to express my deep sense of the responsibility which is imposed upon the Committee which the Government intend to appoint, and I am quite sure that in whatever part of the House the members of that Committee may sit they will have but one object—namely, to strengthen our Empire by bringing about the union of all the races within its boundaries. [*Cheers.*]

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said that the right hon. Member had uttered his usual panegyric on the policy of the Colonial Secretary, and had made statements in the course of his speech which it would be exceedingly difficult to substantiate. The House, he thought, would have noticed from the speeches of both the right hon. Gentlemen who had spoken that there was a very considerable feeling even in their minds against the institution of this Inquiry. The House was apparently pledged to this Inquiry of statements made in the past, statements made rather prematurely and too much under the direct inspiration of the Leaders of the Opposition. Of course, there was no doubt that the two men chiefly responsible for this Inquiry were the hon. Member for Northampton and the right hon. Member for West Monmouth, who usually followed the lead of the hon. Member. He admitted that it was exceedingly difficult for the Government to avoid proceeding with the Inquiry, but he was at the same time convinced that it could only result in evil, and he believed that that was the real opinion of five-sixths of the Members of the House. What good would the Inquiry do? It would drag on to a weary and very possibly exasperating length. If it had any results it would end either in the acquittal of the persons who were likely to be accused, or in a recommendation for their prosecution. Such a prosecution could not well be brought to a close in less than 18 months from the present time, and for a year or more the bitterness of race antagonism, which it was so desirable to allay, would be kept alive in South Africa. The Colonial Secretary's speech was a practical confession of the failure of the policy of the last twelve months. The tone of the right hon. Gentleman that afternoon was very different from his tone in August last, when he delivered a speech full of roseate promises, and led the House to believe that all was going smoothly between the two Governments and the two races in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman declared on August 13 that everything was going on in the most promising way, and that the Boers were passing valuable measures of reform. But what were those measures? The first was a sham Education Bill. Then there was the promise of a Municipality for Johannesburg, which had never been fulfilled, and the law relating to the sale of liquor to natives, which had not been carried out. But what had the Boers done on the other side of the account? No sooner was the British Parliament prorogued than the Volksraad at once passed laws of the most repressive character. The Colonial Secretary never tired of telling them that President Kruger showed a most conciliatory spirit and a desire to promote good will. Could the right hon. Gentleman be ignorant of the fact that President Kruger held the Volksraad in the hollow of his hand, and that he was responsible for the legislation of the Transvaal? What was the character of the recent legislation there? First there was the Aliens Expulsion Law, under which the Boer Executive was entitled to expel from the Transvaal any non-Boer citizens without trial. The whole of the 80,000 Uitlanders were thus placed at the mercy of the six persons who constituted the Boer Executive. Then there was the law for gagging the Press, which gave the Executive special power to fine, imprison, and exile. Thirdly, an Aliens Immigration Law had been passed, under which the Executive was able to prevent the entry into the Transvaal of any aliens whatever. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: "They got that idea from Lord Salisbury's Bill!"] In their negotiations with the Transvaal on these subjects it would be well if the Government were to exhibit a little less patience and a little more courage. How could the Leader of the Opposition tell the House that President Kruger was the friend of moderation, conciliation, and peace, in view of the fact that these monstrous and oppressive laws, so contrary to the tenour and spirit of the Convention of 1884, had been passed and put into execution? Those laws had been put in force, and already the most independent and pro-British newspaper in the Transvaal had been violently suppressed by President Kruger, thereby depriving the Uitlanders of the only means of making their grievances known to this country, and inflicting great financial injury on the proprietor. Those facts changed the situation altogether. The acts of President Kruger were not conciliatory; they were most hostile. The Transvaal was steadily increasing its armaments, and foreign mercenaries were being imported in large numbers. [*Ironical cheers.*] The situation in this country had also changed. Those responsible for the raid had been tried and punished, and this was another reason why it was not necessary to pursue this Inquiry further. The Leader of the Opposition said that the object of the Inquiry was to redeem the good faith, the pledges, and the honour of this country. Those sentiments from the right hon. Gentleman reminded him of the "unctuous rectitude" they had heard of on another occasion. No Member of the House had done more to break the pledges and depreciate the honour of this country than the right hon. Gentleman. [*Ironical cheers.*] Almost every pledge given to British colonies in the past by Governments of which the right hon. Gentleman had been a prominent Member had been deliberately broken, to

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett.

the great injury of the colonists. The principal object of the Inquiry had never been concealed. The hon. Member for Northampton had committed himself in the strongest way to an *ex parte* view of the conduct and character of the Inquiry, and his wish was to drag down if possible the eminent man who had done so much for British dominion and commerce in South Africa. If the Inquiry was to be satisfactory to the Boer Government, who hated Mr. Rhodes with a bitterness that could scarcely be expressed, it must result in injury to the position and influence of that great man. In view of the practical confession of the Colonial Secretary that the policy of conciliation, tried with so much patience and persistence and at the expense of very considerable humiliation, had been proved to have completely and absolutely failed, he thought it most unfortunate that the Committee should be constituted.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said that during the 12 years he had been in the House he had not spoken with a greater feeling of responsibility than he did now. When the speech of the Colonial Secretary was read by President Kruger and the Boer Government he thought that it would hardly tend towards peace, or to that union of the States and colonies of South Africa which was so much desired. The policy of the right hon. Gentleman, as declared that day, would, he feared, prevent certain reforms which were necessary in the Transvaal from being carried out so quickly as might otherwise have been the case. The Colonial Secretary had again repeated certain statements which he ought to know the Transvaal Government repudiated. The right hon. Gentleman said that certain Uitlanders paid nineteen-twentieths of the taxation. The Transvaal Government asserted that this was utterly untrue—that it was a fiction. The Boer Government denied that there were legitimate grievances among the Uitlanders. [*Ironical cheers.*] The two charges that had caused a great deal of trouble in South Africa and had rankled in the minds of certain Africander statesmen had been made, one in the House and one outside. The Colonial Secretary at a South African banquet accused the gentlemen who formed the Government of the South African Republic with being corrupt. The right hon. Gentleman had not repeated that charge in the House; but he had now made the charge that the condition of things in Johannesburg and the grievances there were such that unless the Boer Government brought about a radical change there would probably be a recrudescence of troubles. Those two charges might be true or not, but he asked the House to contrast the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman with what occurred a few years ago. The Jameson raid was not the first raid. The first raid was the Shepstone raid. For four years the British Government controlled the Transvaal—from 1877 to 1881. Did the Government during those four years give a vote to the Uitlanders? Did they carry out the pledge made by the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman that representative Government would be granted? No; during those four years the Transvaal was ruled by the British Government as despotically as Turkey or Russia was now ruled. With regard to President Kruger he believed him to be as honest a man as there was living. Could they say so of the British Government and the Colonial Secretary (Sir Theophilus Shepstone) who formerly administered the Transvaal? If anyone wanted to ascertain the facts he had only to inspect the letters to the Colonial Secretary by the right hon. Member for Bodmin, where it appeared the Colonial Secretary swindled and cheated us, where his presents, his mistresses, even his fishing-rod were all put down as forage, and the British Government had to pay for it, and stopped Sir Theophilus Shepstone's pension for the purpose of making up for the money stolen by himself or his family. Well, it was too strong to say "by himself," for he should not think the old man knew the work he was doing by his sons. With that fact before them, however, it was not advisable to bring a charge of corruption against the men who formed the present Government of the Transvaal. Speaking from the standpoint of the Boers he said they had done all that men possibly could do to aid the Outlanders. He must be frank, however; he did not think the powers given to the Second Chamber were adequate and that reform in this direction was necessary. But the Outlanders appeared to think they ought to be allowed to hold the country in four years for nothing. Why, it was not yet ten years since he went down from Pretoria to lay the foundation stone of the first house in Johannesburg. What had caused all this estrangement? It was the policy adopted by Lord Derby. He agreed with the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the Aliens Bill was not in accordance with the provisions of the Convention of 1884, and if he, by force or otherwise, compelled the Transvaal Government to see that that Convention, as regards the rights given by the Sands River Convention, the Pretoria Convention and the London Convention were carried out, he would be perfectly justified in doing so. Apart from reform of the Second Chamber, the only other grievance was that the Transvaal Government carried on a system not of free trade, but of protection, and gave monopolist concessions for the purpose of developing industry. But was not that the case with other Republics, the French and the American, with the German Empire and other civilised countries. If there were any special taxation put upon aliens different from citizens there would be reason to complain, but the alien had almost the same rights and privileges, so far as taxation was concerned, as the native, and no special burden was placed upon him. All the gold was open to everyone, native or alien. There was no royalty at all in the country, though there ought to have been. With regard to Mr. Cecil Rhodes he had a high respect for him on account of his great ability, high character, and charming personality; and he regretted to see him placed as he was. In his reply earlier in the day the Colonial Secretary seemed to say that one of the questions that must be considered by the Committee was whether the condition of things before the raid was sufficient to justify a rising. He could only say that if the Committee accepted evidence on that point the Boers would tell them it amounted to a breach of the 1884 Convention and affected their right of self-government, and would refuse to give evidence; and if we persevered Heaven knows what terrible results would follow. He regretted that he had been compelled to state so strongly the view held by the Transvaal people in regard to this matter; but it was better that that view should be stated as it was held in the Transvaal.

Sir HENRY HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said that the question which many hon. Gentlemen had been asking themselves, independently of Party considerations, in regard to this Committee was, *Cui bono?* If the agent of this country did a wrong there must be a complete and drastic inquiry into the whole transaction. And if this country entered into obligations to bring certain people to trial, the promise must be carried out. But the obligations of this country had been carried out to the letter. There had been trials both here and in South Africa, and every possible issue had already been raised in regard to some of the subjects of this proposed inquiry. The Committee would inquire into the administration of the territory of the Chartered Company, into the circumstances of the raid, and into the internal administration of the Transvaal. As to the first of those subjects, he could see very little harm in the inquiries of the Committee; though he could not agree with the Leader of the Opposition in comparing the position of affairs with the position of the East India Company. The East India Company was a separate and substantive governing authority outside the authority of the Colonial Office. The Chartered Company had been subject immediately to the Colonial Office, and the Colonial Secretary last year altered the whole constitution of its military arrangements. But in regard to the other two subjects of inquiry he saw every promise of difficulty and danger. A great English proconsul was to be put on his trial. He did not know Mr. Rhodes, and he had never seen him; but he could not help feeling that, a hundred years hence, the men who had added to the Empire a territory seven-fold as great as the United Kingdom, would stand in the rank of men like Clive and Hastings. And if a man like that were to be brought to trial, for a great offence against the State, he ought to be tried by a proper and judicial tribunal. A Committee of the House of Commons, the Members of which were selected because they were partisans, and everyone of whom had more or less made up his mind as to the issue, was not the proper tribunal for such a case. The trial might have been transferred to the grandest Court of Justice in the world—Westminster Hall—where Bacon and Strafford were tried. As it was, the verdict of the Committee, whatever it might be, was discounted beforehand both here and at the Cape. If the Commitee found that no blame at all attached to this great proconsul, he would go back with such power and prestige that he would be a dangerous citizen of the Empire, because he would be sore and angry that he had been brought here not to be impeached for high crimes, but to be brought before a mere Committee of the House of Commons. And was such a Committee to be intrusted with the very delicate questions of alterations and reforms in the internal Government of the Transvaal? He would rather leave such questions in the hands which hitherto, under desperate difficulty and strain, had conducted affairs with admirable skill and prescience. From the day when the Colonial Secretary jumped in front of the German Emperor with that famous dispatch, he had conducted the affairs of South Africa with singular prudence and skill. It must not be forgotten, either, that ours was not an Empire of Englishmen only; and that in these matters we had to deal with a large population which did not speak our language, and which possessed different traditions. In Holland he had seen many newspapers with correspondence from the Cape, showing that angry feeling had been roused in Cape Colony; and he could not help feeling that unless we were careful in handling these questions, we should have a fire ablaze in South Africa which could not be put out without a desperate strain on our resources. It was impossible to deny the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman—that if this matter were to be settled with the concurrence of this country, the Outlanders must be conceded the rights and privileges hitherto denied to them. The right hon. Gentleman had fought hard for that position; and it was impossible to face with equanimity the question being left to a tribunal so inappropriate as a Committee of the House. This was not the time for blustering words. Recriminations ought to be avoided, in order that those subjects of the Crown, who had always been very loyal, but who were very sore just now, should not feel that this Mother of Parliaments was, where Englishmen and Dutchmen were at issue, treating the latter with any want of justice.

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said he had had hopes of not taking part in this discussion, because he was satisfied that, whatever might result from the labours of the Committee, very little good would result from any more speeches which might be delivered. ["Hear, hear!"] After the speech of the Colonial Secretary the House might wisely have allowed the discussion to lapse. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for Salford had spoken anxiously as to the effect of appointing the Committee; but one comfort was that, at any rate, the Committee would not make speeches. [*Cheers.*] They would ask questions and elucidate facts, and possibly they would come to conclusions which would command respect. But they would not make speeches. [*Cheers.*] There would not be that danger of exasperating opinion in South Africa which, he feared, would result from a continuance of this discussion. The hon. Member for Caithness had used language which he could not accept as accurate, when speaking of corruption in the administration of the Transvaal, when the country was under the British Government, and had referred to letters bearing his signature as having exposed that corruption. It was quite true that when the Transvaal was administered by our Government the accounts were kept in an exceedingly loose fashion—especially at the beginning of affairs—and vouchers were not forthcoming for much of the expenditure, or when they were produced they were not considered satisfactory by the Treasury. But the whole amount involved was exceedingly small, and nothing transpired that could sustain a charge of corruption. However, he did not rise to continue the discussion. He felt sure the speech of the Colonial Secretary had persuaded everyone that if we were to clear ourselves this Commission should sit, and that we should wait in patience until its exhaustive inquiries were concluded.

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff) said that, after the discussion which had taken place, and especially after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, that the Government thought they were bound in honour to reappoint the Committee, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Ordered,—That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon; and further, to report what alterations are desirable in the Government of the territories under the control of the Company.

Ordered,—That the Committee have leave to hear Counsel to such extent as they shall see fit, and have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—*(Secretary of State for the Colonies.)*

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green) rose to move an Amendment which stood on the Paper in the name of Mr. P. O'Brien (Kilkenny), proposing "That the Committee do consist of 17 Members."

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order! An Amendment of which notice must be given can only be moved by the hon. Member who put it down.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) pointed out that a Member of the Government had often introduced a Bill of which notice had been given by another Member of the Government.

*MR. SPEAKER: All Members of the Government are considered one person for all such purposes.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN, who had been absent from the Chamber, now returned, and moved his Amendment. He said he understood from the statement of the Colonial Secretary that the Government were prepared to accept his proposal.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said he should not object to the enlargement of the Committee from 15 to 17 Members if the reason were that the Opposition were not fairly represented upon it. But his right hon. Friend the Colonial Secretary had stated as the reason for the proposed increase in the membership of the Committee that a certain section of the Irish Party was not represented upon it at present. He had no personal objection whatever to Nationalist Members sitting on the Committee. He acknowledged their ability and he had experienced their eloquence. [*Laughter.*] But he failed to see a sufficient reason why another Irishman should be added to the Committee, in the fact that the Nationalist Party happened to be divided into sections, and that no Gentleman in that Party could speak on behalf of all his colleagues. [*Laughter.*] Besides, there were other Irishmen in the House besides the hon. Gentlemen opposite. It appeared to him a strange thing that when the Government came to the conclusion that it was necessary to add another Irishman to the Committee they should have overlooked that Irish Party which was mainly responsible for placing them on the Treasury Bench. [*Laughter.*] He did not see why the divisions in the Nationalist ranks should be officially recognised by the Government, especially in view of the fact that it was not at all improbable that before long there would be 80 Nationalist Parties. [*Laughter.*] Great constitutional and Imperial questions might arise before this Committee, and if it were necessary to add another Irishman to the Committee he should not be chosen from the ranks of those who had never shown that Imperial instincts dominated their policy. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said the hon. and gallant Member was entirely mistaken in the view he had taken of the matter. The Government in the course they proposed to pursue in regard to the enlargement of the membership of the Committee were not doing a special favour to any section of the House. They were simply doing a bare act of arithmetical justice to the Nationalist Members. When the Committee consisting of 15 Members was appointed last year with only one Nationalist Member upon it he urged that, in proportion to the strength of the Opposition, the Nationalist Members were entitled to two representatives on the Committee. He failed then to carry his point, but the Government had now yielded to that view, and in order to equalise the representation of parties on the Committee they proposed to add also to the Committee one of their own supporters in the person of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University. It was quite true that, as the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh had said, great Imperial questions were to be considered by this Committee. But all those who took alarm at the prospect of its appointment might be assured by the recollection of what had happened in the case of the Financial Relations Commission, for if the Government were not satisfied with the findings of the Committee they could appoint another. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I desire to say that the Government understood it was the general wish of the House that the Committee should be increased, and they put down the name of my right hon. Friend the Member for London University as the Member they suggested as the representative of this side of the House in the event of another Member being added to the Committee as the representative of the opposite side of the House. Of course, if the House should decline to increase the Committee, and should retain the original number, 15, the name of my right hon. Friend will be withdrawn. I would point out that in the appointment of a Committee practically only two parties have to be considered—that is to say, the Government of the day, and the Opposition, and the Committee is divided in proportion to the Members sitting on the two sides of the House. In the case of a Committee of 15 Members the Government nominate nine members, but they have nothing whatever to do with the nomination of the remaining six. We did nominate our nine members, and a difficulty arose—with which we had nothing whatever to do, and as to which we wash our hands entirely—as to the composition of the other six members. We understood there was a difficulty in substituting another Irish member for one of the members from the Opposition side who had already been nominated, and in order to meet the wishes of the other side we suggested that in that case it might be convenient to increase the number to 17, so that the difficulty might be removed. The decision which the Government came to was really with a view to conciliate everybody; if it has not that effect, and any objection is taken, the Government are perfectly indifferent in the matter. If we have any preference, I may say we would rather go back to the Committee of 15. [*Cheers.*]

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said that as his name had been mentioned, perhaps the House would allow him to say that he thought, from the turn the discussion had taken, it would be very much better to leave the Committee with 15 members. ["Hear, hear!"] Personally it would be a great relief to him.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Committee do consist of 17 Members," put and negatived.

The names of the Attorney General, Mr. Bigham, Mr. Blake, Mr. Buxton, and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman as members of the Committee were agreed to.

On the Motion that Mr. J. Chamberlain be appointed to serve on the Committee,

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said the right hon. Gentleman had said himself that he knew there were charges brought against him. He thought those charges were most abominable, and he was not in the least implying that there was one word of truth in them. [An Hon. Member: "What are they?"] The right hon. Gentleman alluded to them himself, and was it not rather strange, if these charges were made, that the right hon. Gentleman should sit upon the Committee and act as a judge? That was a rather difficult position for him to be in.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT hoped his hon. Friend would not press the point. This Committee would be utterly useless unless they had the Colonial Secretary upon it—["hear, hear!"]—who had had all the means at his disposal of placing before them the information on the subject which they had had.

The name of Mr. Chamberlain was then agreed to, as were also the names of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Cripps, Sir W. Hart Dyke, Mr. John Ellis, Sir W. Harcourt, and Mr. Jackson.

On the Motion that Mr. Labouchere be appointed to serve on the Committee,

Mr. HENRY SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) said he desired to take the opinion of the House whether the hon. Member for Northampton should occupy a place on this Committee. The hon. Member stood in a category by himself, as he had expressed in his interesting journal views hostile to the Chartered Company and to Mr. Rhodes, which, it seemed to him, absolutely pledged the hon. Member to one side of the question. ["Hear, hear!"] It was impossible to suppose that any evidence brought before the Committee would alter the hon. Member's opinion.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I hope my hon. Friend will withdraw his objection. I think I can give him two reasons why he should do so, which, I trust, may be conclusive to his mind. The first is a general reason which applies to the appointment of the members of all Committees. The arrangement is, as I have said, that, the proportions being settled, the nomination of the members on each side is left to their respective side, and for the Government, therefore, to interfere and to object to a nomination from the side of the Opposition, or *vice versâ*, would be to strike at the system under which our Committees are elected and would give rise to endless difficulties in the future proceedings of Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] As to this particular objection, I am bound to point out to my hon. Friend that it is entirely in accordance with precedents that the hon. Member for Northampton, who has undoubtedly taken an extremely strong view, and expressed an extremely strong view in respect to this matter, should be a member of the Committee, and be enabled thereby to bring his charges to the test. ["Hear, hear!"] If a Member of this House thinks that he has an allegation to make of serious importance against any person who may be a witness before a Committee of Inquiry, that is the only proper and reasonable way in which his allegations may be brought to the test. I can quote precedents, such as that of the Hyderabad and Deccan Committee, in regard to which very strong charges were made, I think also by the hon. Member for Northampton. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Member, however, was appointed to that Committee, and did very useful service to the Committee in their endeavour to elucidate the question. Another precedent is the case of the Foreign Loans Committee, in regard to which my noble Friend Lord James of Hereford had made certain charges, and Lord James of Hereford was appointed to serve on that Committee. I think, therefore, we are only following a course in accordance with precedent.

Mr. SETON-KARR said he would withdraw his objection.

The name of Mr. Labouchere was then agreed to, as also were the names of Mr. Wharton and Mr. Wyndham.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SUPPLY.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY moved:—

"That so soon as the Committee of Supply has been appointed and Estimates have been presented, the business of Supply shall (until it be disposed of) be the first Order of the Day on Friday, unless the House otherwise order on the Motion of a Minister of the Crown moved at the commencement of public business to be decided without Amendment or Debate; and the provisions of Standing Order No. 56 shall be extended to Friday.

"Not more than 20 days, being days before August 5 on which the Speaker leaves the Chair for the Committee of Supply without question put, counting from the first day on which the Speaker left the Chair under Standing Order No. 56, shall be allotted for the consideration of the annual Estimates for the Army, Navy, and Civil Services, including Votes on Acount, the business of Supply standing first Order on every such day.

"Provided always, that on Motion made after notice by a Minister of the Crown to be decided without Amendment or Debate, additional time, not exceeding three days, may be allotted for the business of Supply, either before or after August 5.

"On the last but one of the allotted days, at 10 o'clock p.m., the Chairman shall proceed to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the outstanding Votes in Committee of Supply; and on the last, not being earlier than the 20th of the allotted days, the Speaker shall, at 10 o'clock p.m., proceed to put forthwith every question necessary to complete the outstanding Reports of Supply.

"On the days appointed for concluding the business of Supply, the consideration of such business shall not be anticipated by a Motion of Adjournment under Standing Order No. 17; nor may any dilatory Motion be moved on such proceedings; nor shall they be interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

"Provided always, that the days occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of a previous Session, or of any Vote of Credit, shall not be included in the computation of the 20 days. Provided also, that two morning sittings shall be deemed equivalent to one 3 o'clock sitting. That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House."

He said: Mr. Speaker, I think this rule, which was in operation all through last Session, on the whole gave satisfaction to all quarters of the House. I am the last person to suppose that any rule that we may adopt is absolutely without inconvenience, there must always be a balance of inconveniences. I am myself of opinion that the balance in this case is in favour of the rule which we tried experimentally last Session becoming part of our permanent rules. I desire once and for all to put upon record my sense of the manner in which all Parties of the House co-operated to make this rule a success. [" Hear, hear!"] I have seen it attributed to my peculiar foresight and ingenuity that what some critics describe as a reform was carried out with success, but I disclaim all merit whatever in the matter. The merit belongs entirely to the majority and minority in this House, who together resolved that, as far as they could, they would see that our Debates on Supply were conducted in a manner and with that moderation as regards the expenditure of time which can alone make it possible for a Government to give time to the adequate criticism by private Members of our general financial and administrative system. The Government endeavoured, as I believe every Government will always endeavour, to so allocate the Fridays in each week as to meet the convenience of Members of the House. It was in the power of the House last Session, and would be in any future Session, to so deal with the Votes that came on on the earlier Fridays as to drive very important questions on to the later Fridays, and no doubt if that be done the rule would unquestionably break down and we should then revert to the unfortunate system which prevailed so many years, under which the Government first passed all the legislative measures which they thought necessary, and then squeezed into the last weary fortnight of the Session the necessary discussions on the Estimates. I understand from some quarters of the House that there is a desire—I think a natural desire—to try this rule as an experiment, at all events for one more Session. [" Hear, hear!"] I entirely sympathise with that view, and I shall not press the last line of the Resolution which proposes to make the Order part of a permanent legislative arrangement. While the Government will continue in their earnest endeavour to so arrange the business of the House on the successive Fridays as to suit the convenience of Members in all parts of the House, I trust the House, on its side, will during this Session, as during last Session, do all they can to make the rule which was passed in their interests, and not in those of the Government, a real working success. I do not think it needful to say more. If objections are raised I shall be glad to deal with them as far as I can in the reply which I shall have the right to make. Meanwhile, I hope the House will enter upon the experimental part of the Motion with an earnest desire to make the experiment a success. [" Hear, hear!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman does not move the last line?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No, Sir.

*MR. SPEAKER read the Motion omitting the proposal to make the order a Standing Order, and was about to put it to the House, when

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) rose and said: I think we are all in an agreeable humour this afternoon. [*Laughter and* " Hear, hear!"] The Leader of the House has spoken in very moderate terms of the introduction of this new practice—too moderate, I think, because after the experience of last Session we are grateful to him for the introduction of this rule, and particularly for the manner in which he has worked it. [*Cheers.*] Its success depended entirely on the manner in which the Leader of the House dealt with the rule, and on this side of the House I think we have every reason to acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman gave us every facility we could have desired, and he has given us credit, which I think was deserved, on this side of the House —[The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: " Hear, hear!"]—for our efforts to make the rule a success. But the permanent success of the rule must always depend on the manner in which it is dealt with. In framing a permanent constitution we must not rely too much on the virtues of the living Sovereign, because we do not know how far they may be inherited or not by his successor. So I think the right hon. Gentleman has done wisely by stating that there should be further revision of the rule before it is permanently established on the Standing Orders. Of course the danger is that we might have a great block of undiscussed Estimates at the end of a Session. That did not happen last year, but if ever it did, I do not think the rule would prove a success or be accepted by the House. We ought all to endeavour to avoid such a difficulty, and of course one that must be experimental is whether the number of days allotted to Supply are exactly the right number, and it might in the future be necessary to consider whether a large number of days ought not to be allowed. The right hon. Gentleman has shown a wise moderation in agreeing that the rule shall be a sessional order for this year, and I think he may rely upon its being met, as it was last year, by every inclination on our part to make it a success. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. SETON-KARR said that as a private Member he viewed with a great deal of suspicion this cordial co-operation of the Leader of the Opposition with the Leader of the House. He himself objected to the Order, chiefly because it contained a time limit and the hateful principle of the guillotine. This rule worked well last Session, but it did not follow that it would work well every Session, any more than it followed that the present Government would always be in power with a majority of 150 at their backs and a weak and demoralised Opposition in front of them. [*Opposition laughter.*] They might have a man ruling over them in the future who would make a very different use of the rule. ["Hear, hear!"] He submitted that the Leader of the House should be satisfied by taking Fridays and leave out the time limit, which was unnecessary. He also asked the Leader of the House to secure Tuesdays to private Members who wished to move resolutions on abstract subjects. In Supply there was not sufficient scope for discussing such subjects. Private Members would take the uncertain chance of the ballot if Tuesdays were left to them, say, until Whitsuntide. ["Hear, hear!"] He should like to know whether the Factory Acts, the Free Trade Acts, and the Acts for the Protection of Seamen, would ever have been passed had the private Members of the time been deprived of the opportunities they then possessed of bringing forward abstract questions before the House. All the subjects dealt with by those Acts were brought forward by men like Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, Lord Derby, and Mr. Plimsoll, when they were private Members of that House. Yet those measures remained unimpeached for their value at the present day. By depriving private Members of their opportunities for addressing that House they were causing the oratorical power of the House to deteriorate. As matters stood, under recent innovations the oratory of the House was confined to the two Front Benches and to the hon. Member for King's Lynn. The time of the House was now entirely occupied by the Government, and the privileges of private Members were entirely taken from them. There could be no doubt that private Members were desirous of retaining some, at all events, of their old privileges, the existence of which was now threatened. He did not intend to divide the House upon the question, but he sincerely hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give his attention to the points that had been urged upon him in the course of this discussion, and would give hon. Members a satisfactory assurance with regard to them.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down would scarcely be satisfied with what had fallen from the two Front Benches in reference to this subject. He, however, was very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury for the assurance he had given the House that the claims of private Members would receive his sympathetic consideration. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman had been a little too modest when he attributed the success of the rule last Session, not to the Government, but to hon. Members on both sides of the House. Hon. Members must not rely upon the accuracy of that assertion in too great a degree. The resolution of last Session had placed the time of the House absolutely in the hands of the Government. The Government having brought forward that resolution, were bound to make the working under it a success, and in every way to meet the wishes of the Opposition in connection with it. But that might not always be the case, and he should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman could not introduce some words into this very drastic resolution which would prevent any subsequent Government from abusing it. The right hon. Gentleman might himself be a private Member some day, and he appealed to him therefore to so frame the resolution as to prevent its abuse by some future unscrupulous Government. Another point to which he desired to draw attention was that last Session many hon. Members, especially those sitting on the Opposition side of the House, did not approve of the sudden closing of Supply, which they feared might lead to some indecent expressions of objection. Happily, last Session those fears proved to be unfounded. But on the concluding day some 30 votes remained for discussion, and five Divisions were had upon them before the guillotine fell. Fortunately hon. Members were all in such an amicable mood on the occasion that the passing of the last vote was received with general cheering. On that last day some two millions of money were voted, and in his opinion it was a very serious matter to vote such a large sum at a single sitting under the procedure which the rule imposed, especially seeing that the votes included those relating to Uganda and other highly contentious subjects. The fact that such was the case ought to make hon. Gentlemen thoughtful before they agreed to this resolution. Another point was that before this resolution was passed the House had the power of selecting the subjects in the Estimates which they desired to discuss, but after the resolution was passed that power passed to the Government, who might postpone the passing of a vote on which an inconvenient discussion was likely to arise until the guillotine had fallen. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman might effect a great improvement in the resolution by striking out the words "Votes on account." He would not move an Amendment to that effect himself because he had no desire to take up a hostile attitude towards the resolution, but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would consider the point. He might, however, remark that the introduction of votes on account was an evidence of the careless way in which the Estimates had been prepared.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) thought that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had taken away a great deal of the objection which private Members had to their time being taken away. He, however, could not account for the extraordinary fatality that always rendered it necessary for a Conservative Government to make drastic rules still more drastic. It was now proposed to institute a "time gag." He fully appreciated the excellent way in which the principle of the resolution had worked last year. Of course they had now in office a perfectly sound Government who would do nothing that was unfair, but that might not always be the case. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies speaking on the subject in 1893, had said that a "time gag" might be used by an unscrupulous Government for avoiding debates on inconvenient subjects. He asked why in the name of common sense should the Conservative Party seek to emphasise and enlarge the effect of this rule, and to give the Government of the day such a power. The Government ought to rest satisfied with obtaining Fridays for Supply, and should not ask the House to go further in that direction.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that he wished to point out to the hon. Member behind him, that there had been ample time to discuss all matters of interest arising out of Supply last Session. He did not think the Government were open to the complaint urged against them by the hon. Member. For that side of the House it might be said that they seemed to pass their time in defending the Government against their own followers. He and those on the Opposition Benches said that, although the Government was a bad one, they might go farther and fare worse. ["Hear, hear!"] He observed, however, that hon. Gentlemen on the other side limited their opposition to making complaining speeches. The Member for St. Helens was a gentleman who, vowing he would never consent, consented; he said that he disagreed with the Government, but that he acquiesced in their wishes as a faithful follower. He doubted whether the Government cared one sixpence whether the hon. Member took their view or not. [*Laughter.*] All that they wanted from the hon. Member was that he should acquiesce and that, as a dutiful follower, he should walk into the Lobby with them, which he was sure the hon. Member would do most faithfully and humbly. For his part, he was glad the Government were going to renew this rule. He regarded it as an advantage to the Opposition. He thought they had under it more time for discussing the Estimates and that the time was better apportioned than formerly.

Mr. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he had not intended to take part in the Debate on this most reasonable, and, he would add, most useful proposal of his right hon. Friend, which he thought would have been accepted by the House with the unanimity and alacrity which the success of last year, in his judgment, justified, if, indeed, it did not dictate. But he was unwilling to leave the support of the Government proposal entirely to the intermittent compassion of the hon. Member for Northampton. He did not yield to either of his hon. Friends who had spoken on that side in his horror of the gag when applied to check discussion on proposals for legislation. But it seemed to him that both his hon. Friends lost sight of the difference between the gag when applied to Supply and to Bills submitted to that House. That difference was emphatically pointed out by his right hon. Friend when he last year made for the first time a proposal similar to the one now under discussion. Supply must be, and always was, voted sooner or later in each Session of Parliament. This was a proposal to make it sooner instead of later, and to render more effective the discussion of Supply than would be possible were it left, as was done by the late Government, to the last week or ten days of the Session. He was surprised that the Government proposal should be objected to as abridging the privileges of private Members. For himself he should not regard that as a great calamity, but as a fact the suggestions of the Leader of the House would give greater and not less opportunity to private Members, as they insured a certain and a considerable number of days to Supply, which was the delight of the critical private Member. His hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens spoke of what was accomplished on private Members' days in old times by such illustrious Members as Bright, Cobden, and Lord Shaftesbury. Yes; but in those days they did not have 70 to 100 questions put on every Government afternoon to Ministers which took one hour or one and a-half hours of Government time; they did not have two or three Motions for the Adjournment of the House in each Session; and Government Bills were not discussed at the length and during the number of days as now. He had no right and no desire to criticise these altered conditions, but he said they necessitated altered procedure, and because he believed the proposals of his right hon. Friend would conduce to the more efficient and more expeditious dispatch of the business of this House that he should give them his cordial support, and he hoped they would be unanimously accepted by the House.

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said there was one matter to which he wished to call the attention of the Leader of the House. His hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens had endeavoured to drive a bargain with the right hon. Gentleman as to the days to be given to private Members. He did not wish to drive a bargain, but to ask for an act of justice—to make a suggestion which he thought had not been made before. During the last Session it was inevitable that foreign affairs and colonial affairs should occupy a large portion of the time of the House, and he supposed that it was inevitable that their active and energetic Irish friends should manage to obtain a very large and disproportionate share of the time of the House. He asked the Leader of the House and the Secretary to the Treasury to consider the necessity of providing adequate time for the consideration of the large English Votes—Votes for the Home Office, for the Board of Trade, and other Votes. He did not blame the Government that these Votes were postponed to a time of the Session when it was impossible that full time should be given to many important questions. He should ask the right hon. Gentleman and the Secretary to the Treasury to bear in mind, in allocating the time, that although the English Members did not press the Government with vigour and vehemence, there were many questions of great importance, not necessarily controversial questions, to be brought up on the Votes. [" Hear, hear ! "] He had urged last year when this proposal was before the House that the House should be associated with the Government in the allocation of the time to be devoted to the various Votes. He was only desirous of saying now that if they did not find a spirit of fair play and reasonable consideration, as to which he appealed to the Government, this question would come up again.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) ventured to protest against the suggestion that Ireland took up too much time of last Session. Certainly it was not in excess of their tactical capacity —[*laughter*]—and he rather gathered from the statements of the Leader of the House, that this Session Ireland, particularly on financial questions, would have to be heard. It was evident that for the future every patriotic Irish Member, on whatever side of the House he sat, must watch carefully every proposal either of an Irish or an Imperial character. Certainly it would be the duty of himself and hon. Friends to take up rather more of the time of the House in Supply during this Session than they had done of late years. [*A laugh.*] He mentioned that point as one which might be taken into account in calculating as to the probable success of this Rule in future.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) hoped the Leader of the House would consent to the slight modification suggested on his own side of the House, namely, to strike out the words of the Rule giving power to a Minister to allot three additional days to Supply. If that alteration were made he thought it was probable the clause would work well and might safely be made a Standing Order. The Rule had been successful because the Government carried out the reform suggested by Members below the Opposition Gangway. The late Government accepted it and agreed to give Fridays for Supply; they agreed to lay down the principle that they should have two lines, so to speak, one for legislation, and the other for Supply. When Members knew that by obstructing Supply they could not obstruct legislation, they would not be inclined to waste time in Supply. At the same time he thought the votes for the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, and the Board of Agriculture should have a better place than they had last Session, because last year the House passed Bills practically giving those Departments the right to legislate. The First Lord must admit that the discussion had been very reasonable. To-night they had adopted a new precedent, and the right hon. Gentleman would agree that never before had a Government been allowed to take the nights of private Members without a protest. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: " Hear, hear ! "] As a matter of conciliation the right hon. Gentleman might agree to the Amendment suggested.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) congratulated himself upon having been one of the very few Members on the Opposition side of the House who throughout had supported these Rules. The Rules had unquestionably been successful, but at the same time they had taken something away from private Members. It therefore seemed to him that something was due from the Government to private Members in return, and he suggested that that might take the form of a little further progress on the part of the Government in the direction of reforming the Rules of Procedure of the House. There was one way in which, without disadvantage to public business and with very great advantage to the business of any Government, some equivalent could be given to private Members, and that was to make some provision for the continuance of Bills in one Session at the stage at which they were left in the preceding Session.

MR. T. M. HEALY hoped that the time which the Government necessarily saved by rules of this kind would not be used to pass Bills of a minor character, to which strong objection was taken, without giving some return to the general body of Members. Towards the end of the Session there was a great desire on the part of subordinate Members of the Government to push on their own schemes, and they were quite ready to take advantage of the indulgence which the House allowed to the Government as a whole by rules like this. He and his Friends were entitled, under the circumstances, to claim that the Government should use their power and influence with their own supporters to prevent those Irish Measures to which there was no objection being blocked, so that Irish representatives should not return to their constituencies empty-handed.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) did not think it would be to the general advantage that Bills should be hung over from one Session to another, but he believed it would be a great boon to private Members if they were allowed to ballot on Tuesdays for Bills or Notices of Motion. The result would be that many valuable Measures in the hands of private Members would have some chance of passing, which was almost impossible under the present Rules.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London had made a suggestion which he should, of course be glad to consider, although it was not strictly germane to the rule they were now discussing. It was undoubtedly the fact that only those private Bills that were not only uncontroversial, but so uncontroversial that no kind of opposition existed against them, had any chance of passing; and he was afraid there had been cases such as those alluded to by the hon. and learned Member for Louth in which Bills that were really quite unopposed had been, for one reason or another, objected to at 12 o'clock. One side of the House thought the other side had taken an unreasonable objection, and they directly retaliated by taking opposition to a Bill or Bills, and so the contest went on to the general injury of all concerned. It was inevitable that that kind of vendetta should be pursued, and the only suggestion he had to make was that great care should be taken that mere arbitrary objections should not be taken to Measures after 12 o'clock at night. Before he came to the criticisms and suggestions nearly connected with the Rules before them he ought to notice what fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries. When the hon. and learned Gentleman suggested that a Rule should be passed to carry Bills over from one Session to another he must have recognised the fact that there were no body of gentlemen in the House who would probably more object to that than private Members, in whose interests the change was proposed. He had always thought there was a great deal to be said for the change which was long ago advocated at great length by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth, but he believed it would be found that any Government who suggested such a plan would meet with very severe opposition from the first persons whom the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries desired to benefit—namely, the private and independent Members of the House. He would now leave these subsidiary questions and come to what was more revelant on the present occasion. The hon. Member for St. Helens (Mr. Setôn-Karr) backed up by the Parliamentary authority of the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) had raised grave objection to what was called the time limit, which was part of the rule, and he suggested that the first part of the rule should be passed, and that referring to the time limit left out. This, it was thought, would be the better arrangement. But his hon. Friend must see that in making that request they were asking for a great deal. The Government in laying down a time limit did so in order that the rule should not be used as an instrument for obstructing legislation; for if there was no time limit—if that part of the resolution was deleted they might find themselves in August or September with a mass of the Supply undisposed of, and the time being occupied in delaying legislation. ["Hear, hear!"] That, he thought, would be a one-sided bargain. He recognised that the present or any other Government might be driven out of the rule, but the consequence of this would be that they would have to revert to the old system and cram Supply into the late days of August and September. They would really give the Government more power without a time limit than with one, as they could not force the hand of the Government to bring on Supply at their desire, for the Government could easily put off Supply by Votes on account until the months he had just mentioned. Of course he did not approve of that course

—of postponing Supply until the House had partly emptied itself, and when hon. Members were too exhausted to discuss any difficult question fully. ["Hear, hear!"] He admitted, therefore, that the rule might be passed without a time limit, but he urged that that rule as it stood tied the hands of the Government far more than the course for which the hon. Member for Islington contended, and even under the worse management with regard to Fridays it would be impossible to prevent hon. Members from discussing, week by week, the administrative shortcomings of the Government. The hon. Member for West Islington (Mr. Lough) had remarked that he would like to see Votes on account left out of the rule. He doubted whether it would be wise to do so, but before definitely pronouncing on the point he should like to see how the rule worked for another Session. The hon. Member seemed to think that the necessity for Votes on account had something to do with the laxity, or bad arrangements of the Government. But that was not so. All Governments must take Votes on account in order to carry on the business of the country, and no skill on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary to the Treasury, could possibly avoid the necessity. The hon. Member for St. Helens, referring to Tuesdays, had said with perfect truth, that questions could be brought on and discussed on those days under the old rule which it would be practically impossible to discuss on Fridays under the Estimates, and he referred to discussions on Tuesdays which had been of great value, and which had been calculated to bear fruit in the development of the policy of the country. That was true, and he should be desirous to preserve, as far as possible, a reasonable number of Tuesdays for the use of private Members, but private Members, as far as his experience went, constantly showed their appreciation of this privilege by having an early count and going home to dinner. [*Laughter.*] When his hon. Friend appealed to him that no Tuesdays should be taken before Whitsuntide he must surely have felt that he was making a request to which neither the present, nor any other Government could possibly accede. But the Government had no desire to take more Tuesdays than was absolutely necessary. Last Session the Government adhered to this rule; Fridays were never interfered with except in respect of Government Bills, and he hoped that experience would be repeated. He hoped that under no provocation would the Government be induced to infringe the rule to take Supply every Friday during the Session. ["Hear, hear!"] While there was every desire to preserve Tuesdays as far as possible for private Members, that must be made subordinate to those private questions in which not only the Government, but large numbers of private Members were interested. His hon. Friend appeared to think that unless private Members were bringing forward or discussing some abstract resolution they were no better than blind animals, following blindly the direction of the Government or the Opposition as the case might be. That was not the view he took of the functions of a private Member. He was for many years a private Member, and he did not remember that he ever brought forward an abstract resolution on a Friday, and he repudiated the idea that during those years he was nothing better than a blind animal. [*Laughter.*] He thought it would be desirable in the course of the present Session to give some priority to those important Votes in Supply, which were not discussed at great length in a previous Session, and if the House would consent for the purposes of Supply within reasonable limits, to regard two or three Sessions as one, these important Votes which had not been adequately discussed in a previous Session, might, in course of time receive the full attention of the House. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) thought that after a Bill had passed the Second Reading and through the Committee stage, no single private Member should be allowed to oppose it on the Report stage, or on the Third Reading. This was the practice under the old Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule, and did much to facilitate useful legislation.

Resolution agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee:—

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER, Chairman of Ways and Means, in the Chair.]

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1896-7.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £255,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897."

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) moved to reduce the Vote by £20,000, which was approximately the Irish contribution to that sum. He took this course for this reason. This was a large Vote for the physical education of the English people, and there was no similar provision for the physical education of the Irish people. This Vote was placed among the Army Estimates, but they knew that that was not a correct description of the Vote. From the military point of view, no one could seriously contend that the Volunteers were a great advantage to the country.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said the hon. Member would be quite out of order in discussing the general question on this Vote. The hon. Member must strictly confine himself to the limits of the items of the Vote which was now presented to the Committee.

MR. KNOX said he saw the Vote related entirely to Volunteer Corps. These Volunteer Corps were entirely in Great Britain. There was not a single Volunteer Corps in Ireland, and he took objection to that distribution of Imperial expenditure. This expenditure was confined solely to one part of the United Kingdom.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: Order, order! That argument is applicable to the original Vote. It does not apply to this part. The hon. Member must confine himself strictly to this Supplementary Estimate. He must not discuss the general principles of Volunteers Corps or whether the money applied to Volunteer Corps should be applicable to Ireland or not. It does not arise on this Vote.

MR. KNOX said he should postpone the greater part of his remarks until they came to the Army Estimates. On that occasion he should go into the whole subject. He wished merely to move, as a matter of protest, the reduction of £20,000. He wished to ask why it was that this extraordinary course was taken every year in succession, of presenting an enormous Supplementary Estimate for the Volunteers. He wanted to know why this payment, which was really made in April, should not be included in the original Estimate, and why there should be an entirely fallacious decrease shown on the original Estimate. Surely it was known that the Department would have to propose this additional sum before the close of the financial year? It was a false principle to proceed on the basis of first bringing in an estimate which they knew would not do them, and then bringing in this fresh Estimate, having got some sort of apparent credit for having kept their Army Estimates down. He saw nothing in the items of this Supplementary Estimate which could not in the ordinary course have been foreseen in the original Estimate that was set down by the Department. The present course was not, in a financial sense, being quite fair with the House. This Supplementary Estimate was vicious in principle, and it was entirely contrary to the financial principles which ought to guide that House. It was not right to cut down at the beginning of the year and to claim credit on a ground which they knew was baseless, and on these grounds he moved to reduce the Vote. They knew it was usually done; they knew it had become customary, and he would like to ask this simple question—whether it is contemplated by the Government to make this an exceptional arrangement, or whether they intended to repeat it year by year?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he desired to offer his hearty thanks to the Government for the enormous deal they had done for the Volunteer Force. In reply to the hon. Gentleman opposite, he would like to ask how was it possible for the Government to foretell what was the number of efficients in the Volunteer year before that year was completed? The Volunteer year only ended on the 31st of October, and it was quite impossible for the Department to tell what would be the number of efficients at the end of the Volunteer year. He was sure the Committee would be delighted to see the great increase in the number of efficients in the Volunteer Force, and the diminution of those earning the third-class grant. There was one point on which he would like to ask his right hon. Friend for information. That had reference to the matter of Sergeant-Majors of Volunteer Corps.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said it would not be in order to discuss this matter, which was not included in the Vote.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT submitted that there would not be a capitation grant at all without sergeant-majors.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS said it was not the capitation grant that came under discussion, only the Supplementary grant.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said he would not trespass further on the time of the Committee; he simply gave this indication of the desirability of giving attention to the matter.

MR. LOUGH asked the right hon. Gentleman in his reply not to confine himself to meeting the argument advanced on behalf of Ireland, but to give some explanation of what this increase of the capitation grant meant. If it was to provide more efficiently for the Volunteers in order that they might be an economic substitute for the army, then he would be very glad to hear it. He would far rather vote for better provision for the Volunteers than add to the extravagance of the regular army.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said there was one item in the Vote he did not quite understand, and it seemed to him to be original, and, if so, it raised a question of principle, and that was the additional capitation allowance for engineers efficient in submarine mining. As this stood, it would seem to be, not a continuation of the original Vote, but a new additional grant. All the other portions of the Estimate were continuations of the original Vote, but with regard to this item, as it was described, it looked as if it were not in the same category. He only wished to know whether any new method was to be adopted for promoting efficiency of engineers in submarine mining. His own idea was that this duty ought not to be confined to engineers, but should be entrusted to sailors. Did this involve a new grant?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said he thought, perhaps, the description was not the best that could have been chosen. The intention was that it should be a special allowance for efficiency in submarine mining. The fact was, engineers had to spend considerable extra time to make themselves efficient, and had greater wear and tear of clothing than other Volunteers, and in consequence it was found extremely desirable at the ports to offer inducements to Volunteers to enter this particular service, and about ten years ago the War Office offered this special capitation allowance, enabling these corps to be kept up. His hon. Friend, who was continually taking the Navy under his charge, thought that sailors would do the work better, and he could inform him that sailors did undertake the work at some ports, and did it very well. As to the general criticisms offered by the hon. Gentleman opposite, there was nothing in the nature of that evasion the hon. Member assumed there was in presenting these Supplementary Estimates. The fact was, that last year about this time the Government asked Parliament to give the whole capitation grant to the Volunteers, in order to bring up to date payments they considered, in some cases, remained in arrear, and such, according to the War Department's view, were made in advance. The hon. Member was of opinion that the Volunteers began their year with the financial year, but the Volunteer year began in November, and consequently in paying them in April they were paid when five months of the year had run, and some of the officers said they were paid only half way through the year. For this reason, the Chancellor of the Exchequer assenting, and it being convenient, public funds permitting, the advances were made at a rather earlier period this year than in other years. There was no fetish about the 1st of April, and this was done in the present year because it was convenient to public funds, and there were economies also allowing it, and so it was arranged the payments should be made in January and February. It was, he understood, convenient to the Volunteers, and there was no reason whatever why it should be withheld until the month of April.

MR. KNOX said the right hon. Gentleman had not met the point raised. He could not see any reason why this should not have been estimated at the time the original Estimates were drafted. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, who invited him to join his regiment, took the ground that it was impossible to foretell how many Volunteers there might be to come in for these grants for efficiency, but he did not understand it was the view of the War Office that there was this extraordinary fluctuation in the Volunteer force. Their point was, that certain capitation grants were due on April 1, and they asked Parliament to allow them to adopt the course of paying them in the same year before April 1. That was a bad principle. If the Volunteers ought to get payment in February before it was absolutely due, then this ought to be done every year. The Volunteers were not more hard-up this than another year. Naturally they wanted it every year, and if there was a good reason for it then the payment should be made in advance every year. What would happen if this were not paid now, but allowed to go over? The payment would come into the new Estimates for a new year, and probably at the end of that year there would be another payment to meet because it was convenient, and working out this it would be found that the Volunteer Estimate for one year might be double what it was the year before. He did not suppose that would be done, for it was perfectly clear that if the Treasury adopted the principle of allowing payments to be made in advance they must follow it out every year, or there would be loud complaints from Volunteers of going back on the arrangement. It must have been known at the beginning of the year that this would have to be paid out before April, and therefore provision should have been made for it in the Estimates.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) was not at all satisfied, and did not think that a satisfactory reason had been given for not including this in the original Estimates. He was quite sure that if a board of directors in a commercial enterprise were to make such a blunder in an original estimate they would be bundled out of office by the shareholders. Why did not the War Department conduct its affairs in a businesslike way?

Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £235,300, be granted for the said Service."

The House divided:—Ayes, 23; Noes, 127.—(Division List, No. 8.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (REPORTS OF MONEY COMMITTEES).

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY moved:—

"That the Proceedings on the Reports of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means and other Committees authorising the expenditure of Public Money may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and shall not be interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House, except of Standing Order No. 5."

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY).

Considered in Committee:—

[CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS in the Chair.]

*MR. BRODRICK moved:—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of any sums not exceeding in the whole £5,458,000, for the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow by means of terminable annuities, payable out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, such sums as may be required for the purpose of providing money for the issue of the above-mentioned sum of £5,458,000 out of the Consolidated Fund, or the repayment to that Fund of all or any part of the sum so issued, and also to authorise the application of the Surplus of Income above Expenditure for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1897, towards paying any sums authorised to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund for Military Works."

He said: I rise to renew the Motion made in this House in June last. On that occasion I briefly explained to the House the reasons which, in the judgment of the Government, made it necessary to ask Parliament to undertake certain urgent military services by loan. The House may, perhaps, desire that I should justify the proposal to proceed in this manner rather than through the medium of the annual Estimates, and it is desirable, for the benefit of those who may not have the past history of this matter in their recollection, to remind the Committee that the services proposed to be undertaken are such as it has been customary for the last 50 years to undertake out of capital moneys and not out of annual Estimates. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1854-6, at the time of the Crimean War, a sum of £860,000 was spent on building large camps for the extra soldiers then under arms. In 1860 Lord Palmerston and succeeding Ministers applied to Parliament for loans amounting to a sum of £7,460,000 in respect of forts and other defences round the coast. In 1872, Lord Cardwell carried out the Localisation of the Forces by an Act, under which £3,500,000 of capital money had been spent. In 1888, Mr. Stanhope, by the Imperial Defence Act, obtained £2,600,000 for the fortification of our Military Ports and Coaling Stations. In 1890 a sum of £4,100,000 was granted for the reconstruction of barracks, in consequence of the representatives before Lord Randolph Churchill's Committee that the condition of some of our barracks was a disgrace to the British nation. This last loan, I should mention, differed from those which preceded it, in that it was repayable, and is being repaid, by annual instalments charged on the Army Estimates. It is in pursuance of the policy accepted by Parliament in relation to the loans of 1888 and 1890 that we are now forced to come to Parliament again. There was no pretence at the time—as any reference to Mr. Stanhope's statement will show—that the loans then granted represented a final or complete treatment of the services for which provision was asked. On the contrary, Mr. Stanhope, in introducing the Bill of 1888, spoke as follows:—

> "It will be fully understood that the scheme now submitted does not pretend to be an exhaustive one, or to complete all the defences which the Military Authorities think necessary and desire to see carried out. What it does aim at is to carry out in the next three years, or in other words, as quickly as possible, all the most urgent of these defences."

He said: I rise to renew the Motion asked for by the Military Authorities amounted to £9,000,000; Lord Randolph Churchill's Committee vouched for the necessity of the service; and the amount voted by the House of Commons in 1890 was £4,100,000. We are thus brought face to face with the difficulty which we are asking Parliament to enable us to meet. Loans have been granted for the more urgent fortifications which could be carried out in three years, and for the barracks which it was estimated could be erected in five years. Those loans are now exhausted, and we are obliged to come to Parliament again. In the face of the above-named precedents, I do not know whether any question will be raised as to the course we propose to take of proceeding by loan. The advantages of this course are so overwhelming that it is not astonishing that Parliament has sanctioned it again and again. It is obvious in all matters connected with fortification or the renewal of barracks, that it is unwise and uneconomical to proceed haphazard. A recognised scheme must be drawn out. ["Hear, hear!"] Contracts must be entered into, and work proceeded with regularly from month to month. This is exceedingly difficult under annual Estimates. Money may be available in one year, and not in another, which causes postponement and delay. Even when money is available, no contract can be made for a fresh work till the Vote is passed by Parliament—an event frequently delayed till the best building months of the year are gone. When money has been voted and the building commenced, a long frost in the winter may upset all calculations, and perhaps reduce the expenditure in the financial year by one-third, which money returns to the Exchequer, and the funds have, in the following financial year, to be re-voted, this course possibly necessitating fresh taxation by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose provision for this service in the preceding year has been torn from him by the ruthless clutches of the National Debt Commissioners. [*Laughter.*] If we proceed by loan, all these inconveniences are avoided. Moreover, I submit that this process opens the most convenient channel for Parliamentary criticism. A scheme can be put forward as a whole; it can be discussed, modified, or rejected. Whatever is approved can then be carried out in the promptest and most economical manner. The Resolution to which we ask the Committee to assent is to the expenditure of £5,458,000. Of this sum £1,120,000, or about one quarter, relates to services in which the Navy has an equal interest, with the Army, if not a primary interest. I do not refer to the cost of guns or ammunition, which, being of a less permanent nature than the works, will be provided on annual Estimates. We have four classes of ports for which defence has been authorised by Parliament in the past. We have military ports, and naval bases at home of the type of Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Cork. We have to defend mercantile harbours, such as the Clyde, Forth, Dublin, Belfast, and the Bristol Channel. We have Gibraltar, Malta, and other fortresses abroad; and we have coaling stations in every part of the globe, which though fortified and manned by the Army, are maintained for the service of the Navy. The additions which are now proposed to the defence of these ports are due to two main causes. The first of these being the provision of works for medium and quick-firing armament, which has not hitherto been supplied, and the defences against torpedo-boat attack at our naval bases which has been strongly urged by the Admiralty. The second is that the large Admiralty works contemplated at Gibraltar have made it necessary further to strengthen the armament at that fortress, while the development of foreign power in the seas to the east of the Cape, make it incumbent on us to secure our ports in those seas against such an attack as could be made upon them. ["Hear, hear!"] So far we are asking Parliament for nothing except to make good a policy which it has already sanctioned. But we have been obliged, under urgent pressure from the Admiralty, to consider the fortification of four harbours at home, to enable trading ships to find protection on reaching our shores in the event of war, and to enable Her Majesty's fleet to act with greater freedom and activity in the Atlantic. These four harbours selected for their naval tactical character are Berehaven, Lough Swilly, Falmouth, and Scilly. Now, before I justify these proposals, I ought to make it clear to the Committee how these questions, which involve more than one of our two great services, are dealt with. Any question of defence or of combined attack which arises at the Admiralty or the War Office is referred for consideration to the Joint Naval and Military Committee on Defence, on which the Senior Naval Lords and two other Naval Members represent the Admiralty, while the Army is represented by the Adjutant General, the Inspector General of Fortifications, and the Inspector General of Ordnance. Their conclusions are considered by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War, who either decide the question or, if its importance warrants it, as in the present instance, bring it before the Cabinet Committee, presided over by the Lord President of the Council, at which the Commander-in-Chief and the Senior Naval Lord are present. This system has worked with great harmony and smoothness, and the House may rest assured that the proposals now submitted are founded on the best expert opinion, reviewed not only in principle, but in detail by the Cabinet Committee. The addition of quick-firing guns to the defences, and the further provision necessary against torpedo attack were put forward after exhaustive inquiry by the Joint Naval and Military Committee in 1892 and 1894, and the Government included them in this Bill when it was proposed to introduce it last year, because they felt that, with due consideration to the safety of the ports affected, they could no longer be delayed. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to the mercantile strategic ports named above, the Naval and Military Committee were unanimous in attaching a just importance to the defence of these strategic naval positions. They reported in these words:—

> "Berehaven and Lough Swilly are natural harbours admirably situated as strategic harbours on the verge of the open ocean. If defended they would not only afford a very considerable safeguard to our trade and commerce, but would enable Her Majesty's Fleet and ships to act with greater freedom and activity, confident in the existence of a coal supply at the very points where it would be wanted by vessels covering our trade and acting against hostile squadrons in the Atlantic. With the resources of these ports available, our ships would be able to chase further and would be placed at an advantage as to coal endurance compared with the ships of any nation to which we may be opposed. It is certain that the waters to the south and west of Ireland will receive much attention from an enemy seeking to injure our trade. Berehaven would save 180 miles of coal distance to Her Majesty's vessels cruising in the Atlantic. Lough Swilly is a most important point, especially for the American trade, which would in case of war pass round to the north of Ireland. Falmouth is required for a dispatch station. The Scilly Isles, connected as they are by telegraph with England, form a most important signal station. With a coal supply available at this spot, a fleet covering the channel could be kept coaled up ready at all times to chase in full strength."

Nothing that could be said from this Bench would add anything to the combined and deliberate opinions of our Naval Advisers on these points, but I would beg the Committee to notice that the sum it is proposed to vote to complete the defence of these ports and coaling stations all over the world will not in all absorb more than the price of a single ironclad or than that of any two of the great Atlantic liners, which for the lack of a single one of these protected harbours might become a prey to an enemy's cruiser on the outbreak of war. ["Hear, hear!"] The second heading of the Schedule, and pecuniarily the largest, is that for barracks and completion of large camps, on which we ask Parliament for £2,989,000. I do not propose to detain the Committee long on this head, because the question is one which is familiar to the House and to the country. In 1889 £9,000,000 were pressed upon us by the Military Authorities to meet the necessary amendments of barrack accommodation, and £4,100,000 was voted as immediately urgent. If I am asked to state why £9,000,000 were required, the answer is that for the first two-thirds of this century the housing of the troops was greatly neglected, that there has been a great advance of sanitary science in the last few years, and a general rise of the standard of accommodation for all classes of the population. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, there is a continuous and healthy pressure from this House that the Army, for the benefit of recruiting and for the credit of the country should be properly housed. ["Hear, hear!"] The sum now proposed is necessary, first, to complete the replacing of wornout and unsanitary wooden huts at Aldershot, the Curragh, Colchester, and Shorncliffe. These were originally built to last 20 years, and although those erected at the time of the Crimean War were dealt with in 1890, those erected between 1855 and 1875 have far outrun their span of existence, and are most costly to maintain in repair. Next we have to provide for the increased garrisons at fortresses and coaling stations abroad, which have been pressed upon us by the Colonial Defence Committee or by the increases of garrison under successive Governments. We have also to build a cavalry barrack in Ireland, in place of Island Bridge Barracks, from which the troops have had to be withdrawn owing to typhoid fever; we have a Military hospital to build in London; we have to replace the barracks destroyed by fire at Winchester; and we propose to erect a large number of married quarters at various stations, in order to obviate the inconveniences which fall on a class on whom Military service often presses hardly. The details of the proposed expenditure under the head of Barracks will, as in 1890, be laid before the House in a schedule. So far I have been dealing with undertakings for which we have already received the authority of the House. I come now to the last head of the Loan—£1,149,000, the main items of which represent proposals of a novel character. To these proposals I beg the special attention of the Committee. We have, however, in the first instance, to complete the arrangements for mobilisation for the defence of London, for which sums have been taken in the annual Estimates. The principle on which our troops will be employed for defence in case of invasion was drawn out ten years ago by the most eminent soldiers of the day, and was then approved by the Government. The points at which the various army corps will be stationed for the immediate attack of an invading force have been clearly laid down. But it has been held that, apart from the Mobile Army and the recognised garrisons, London must be surrounded by defensive positions strongly held and fortified with artillery, as a second line of defence. ["Hear, hear!"] By this means alone can the field army be given absolute freedom of movement, and have the security that a light column striking at London from some other point of the coast will meet with determined resistance. ["Hear, hear!"] These positions therefore have, after an exhaustive survey, been selected by trained officers, and approved by the Commander in Chief and Adjutant General. Since 1888, by successive votes of Parliament, 13 of these centres have been acquired; storehouses have been erected on several of them, and works commenced. The scheme, therefore, is in full working, and the expenditure hitherto has been about £68,000. A further sum of £96,000 is required mainly to complete the storehouses and the access to the works. The objects attained will be recognised by every Member of the House. Sites have been chosen deliberately instead of hurriedly; concentration at these sites has been worked out; the storehouses will contain the ammunition and entrenching tools assigned to the lines of entrenchments to be manned, and we shall thus carry further the decentralisation of stores. Ten years ago the stores were all concentrated at Woolwich; and it was estimated that it would have then taken six weeks to distribute the stores in the event of war. In addition to the more easy and expeditious distribution of stores, we shall moreover have the very large forces assigned to these positions so placed as to be available within a few hours, to be drawn forward to support the field army in any place where additional numbers are required. ["Hear, hear!"] Even at a distance of nearly a century it may be worth quoting the opinion given by the Emperor Napoleon as to the value of fortified positions, especially in the case of the less highly trained troops:—

> "At the time of great national disasters Empires frequently stand in need of soldiers; but men are never wanting for internal defence, if a place be provided where their energies can be brought into action. 50,000 National guards, with 3,000 gunners, will defend a fortified capital against an army of 300,000 men. The same 50,000 in the open field, if they are not experienced soldiers, commanded by skilled officers, will be thrown into confusion by a few thousand horse."

The last, but not the least pressing of our requirements which I have to bring forward is the provision for the training of the troops by means of ranges and of manœuvres. ["Hear, hear!"] The question of ranges in this densely populated country is becoming yearly more difficult. ["Hear, hear!"] We have to find means for Corps of the Regular Army, of Militia, and of Volunteers, to shoot every year. We could not of course undertake to provide ranges in every county or for isolated companies. But our proposal is to expend a sum of £500,000 in setting up ranges at various centres throughout the country—with, it is hoped, camping grounds attached to them—at which it will be the duty of the General Officer Commanding to see that every description of troops has the opportunity of firing during the year. ["Hear, hear!"] I am sure the Committee will agree that that is the only way in which we can meet this great national dilemma in regard to the provision of ranges. ["Hear, hear!"] I cannot, of course, indicate localities, but I can assure the House that cheapness and ease of access will be the primary considerations. The Military Authorities have also pressed upon the Government a further step which, subject to the assent of Parliament, we propose to take without delay. The difficulty experienced in training the troops owing to the absence of manœuvres was brought before the House last year. We have in all 400,000 infantry, cavalry, and mobile artillery in this country. In case of war a General would have to handle at least 100,000 men. But there is no ground at present in this country where a General can learn the tactical command of more than 10,000 men. We are therefore asking our Generals to go into action, each with one of his arms tied behind his back—["hear, hear!"]—and the fact that the

House of Commons did not see its way last year to pass the Military Manœuvres Bill has rendered it more necessary that we should take steps to rescue our troops from their present hampered position as regards effective manœuvring. ["Hear, hear!"] Representations on this subject have been showered upon us by the Military Authorities. Lord Wolseley, the Commander in Chief, writes to the Secretary of State for War:—

> "The regiments drill well and march past admirably, but neither the Generals, the Staff, nor the regimental officers are as well instructed in the practical side of a soldier's training as they should be. Our best officers know the theory well, but are sadly in want of experience in practising what they have learned from books. That experience they cannot obtain under existing circumstances in England, and I can see no prospect of their being as efficient as the nation expects them to be until they are annually given an opportunity of learning their work practically over a sufficiently wide extent of country. I think it my duty to impress on your Lordship, once more, the urgent necessity of purchasing a large and sufficient manœuvring area for the instruction of the home Army in the art and method of war."

Lord Roberts, than whom there is no officer who has had greater experience in India, and who is now Commander of the Forces in Ireland, writes in a similar strain of the absolute necessity for instructing the troops in manœuvring. Sir Evelyn Wood, Quartermaster General, writes of the difficulty at present of training the Transport Service, which is not the least important of the services of the Army. He says that extended manœuvres are absolutely necessary if transport is to be trained. The Duke of Connaught, who commanded the manœuvres this year at Aldershot, reported to the War Office that the space available at Aldershot in August was such that manœuvres were impossible, and that only tactical instruction could be given. Finally, I quote the opinion of General Luck, Inspector-General of Cavalry, who has had immense experience in the handling of cavalry, which no man in Europe or Asia understands better than he. General Luck says:—

> "Nowhere in the United Kingdom where Cavalry are quartered is it possible to even drill a Cavalry division; to manœuvre one is quite out of the question. At Aldershot and the Curragh there is barely room to drill a weak Brigade; no room to manœuvre one. At none of the other stations is there even room to practise a Regiment so as to fit it to take part in a Brigade. To send a large force of Cavalry on a campaign under inexperienced officers would be simply courting disaster."

Lord Lansdowne, with these opinions before him, felt that it was quite impossible to take the responsibility of ignoring these demands. We feel the necessity of holding from time to time such large manœuvres as those for which we asked for a Bill last year. But we hold, beyond this, that we ought at all times to be able to manœuvre our cavalry, and to give a reasonable force of infantry an opportunity of training. Having regard to the fact that at Aldershot and in the neighbourhood the value of land since our occupation of it has gone up four or five-fold, and that we cannot purchase land round there at anything like a reasonable price, we have been obliged to seek some manœuvring ground in some other quarter. For this purpose my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary (Mr. Powell-Williams) early in the autumn entered into negotiations for the purchase of a tract of land with a considerable number of landowners, with a view of obtaining a provisional agreement in case the step proposed should be approved by Parliament. We have commenced to enter on those agreements, and we have every hope that, as a considerable number of them are concluded already, we shall be able to purchase a tract of land amounting to 40,000 acres, or about 60 square miles, on Salisbury Plain—[*Cheers*]—a proceeding which will, at a cost of less than £450,000—not more, that is the extreme amount required—give us a manœuvring ground three times the size of any available at Aldershot. This site is pronounced by the military authorities to be admirably fitted for military purposes; it will give us a good rifle range, and may also enable us to do our artillery shooting there instead of at the present distant ranges. As regards price, if it be thought that we are asking for a large sum, I should like to remind the Committee that the State of Wurtemburg alone about two years ago spent a larger sum in providing a manœuvring ground for cavalry. We should, therefore, be making a good bargain for the nation, and I think it would certainly be an extraordinary thing if the British nation should refuse its troops the training which was pronounced necessary by all the military advisers simply because of this sum which we now ask for. I have desired to make it clear that the expenditure we ask for is of a permanent character. The fortifications which we propose to put up will be at places which always remain undefended; the barracks which we should substitute for these wooden huts ought to last for a hundred years; the land which we propose to buy will be a permanent and probably an increasingly valuable investment; and the sum which the Committee ask for for the whole loan will be repayable within 30 years. Therefore, we have not lightly entered upon this expenditure. There has been no time when the co-operation between Army and Navy has been closer than it is at the present moment. The heads of the two services are being constantly brought together, and the proposals, so far as they connect the two services, have the common consent of both. The Committee should remember that although large sums were voted for the Navy last year, we ought not to let our zeal thoroughly to equip the service on which we primarily depend prevent us from doing what is necessary to enable the Army to fulfil its functions. After all, an army besides its duties has its rights; every soldier who joins the service has the right to be housed fairly, and in a sanitary way—[hear, hear!"]—and every soldier has the right to get such training as will give him a fair chance with the soldiers of most foreign countries, and to know that he goes into action under Generals qualified to lead him. ["Hear, hear!"] We have asked for this expenditure because we think it is a sound and economical way of carrying on the work. I cannot conceive a worse economy than that we should vote 21 millions every year for the Navy, and not render impregnable the coaling stations on which the Navy depends for its utility, and in the same way I suppose we could not do a worse service to the country than to ask them to vote 18 millions for the Army and deprive our troops of the training which all foreign countries and every British officer considers necessary. Under those circumstances, having explained our motives, and having assured the Committee that we are asking for the minimum sum which is considered necessary for military efficiency and national safety, I can only say that I look with confidence to receiving a verdict of the House of Commons in our favour. [*Cheers.*] He moved the resolution authorising the expenditure of the money necessary for the purposes of the Bill.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said he should support the Resolution as a friendly critic. He felt regret that the Government were not able to proceed with the Military Manœuvres Bill of last year, and thought that, considering the importance of the interests involved, they were not quite stern enough in their desire to carry it. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought the present expenditure ought to have been entered upon as soon as it was considered necessary. He dared say that many of his hon. Friends on that side of the House might differ from him in regard to the present Bill, but he doubted whether they would see their way to oppose it as a whole. As to the proposal to proceed by way of loan, there was, of course, a great controversy as to this system applying to the Navy, but he thought there had never been any difference of opinion in regard to measures such as the present. There could be no doubt that fortifications, barracks, and coaling stations had been so dealt with on former occasions, and there could be no ground for a new departure on this occasion. He wished that for all proposals of this kind, for which the Defence Committee of the Cabinet was responsible, they could have an even stronger statement from the Government. He had noticed in Parliament this Session, and in speeches during the recess, signs that the authority of the Committee of the Cabinet presided over by the Duke of Devonshire was increasing, and was stronger than it was this time last year. It then seemed doubtful whether it had the authority it was desirable it should possess. The statement of the Under Secretary for War involved considerations of policy larger than the mere figures of some of the items. The first of the heads under which the right hon. Gentleman divided his speech concerned works which, although technically military, were, in fact, naval works for the benefit of the fleet in its maritime defence of the British Islands and the

Empire. He himself shared with the former First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) the opinion that we should follow the example of foreign countries by taking out of the hands of the Army, which did not manage them properly, stations intended for naval purposes. The Army should not have the management of what was intended for the Navy. The example of almost all the military Powers of the world was against us on this point. An American gentleman, who had recently made a careful survey of the coast defences and coaling stations of the various Powers, had reported that our arrangements were primeval and antiquated. The naval stations of the other Powers were under the control of their navies, and this gentleman thought it a much wiser plan than ours. It was shown last year how the Army and Navy had thrown backwards and forwards, like battledore and shuttlecock, the garrisoning of the naval bases of the country. All these bases should be under the control of the Navy, as was the case in Italy, France, and Germany. The second head of the Under Secretary's statement covered the question of barracks. It was a question as to which past experience should make the House careful and prudent. He did not complain of the expenditure or its amount. But where barracks were built sometimes had an undue effect on the disposition of forces. The localisation of our forces often depended on considerations which, when traced out, came to the accident of where barracks had been built under former loans. Therefore the policy of barrack loans should be carefully watched, that they might not continue the evil system former barrack loans involved them in. The building of cavalry barracks in town had been fatal to the efficiency of cavalry, and they should follow the example of Belgium by stationing them where they could perfect themselves in their duties. The Under Secretary seemed to think the proposal in connection with forts for the defence of London was a novelty. His chief reason for supporting the Vote of £96,000 asked for for this purpose was that it was not a novelty. The forts were begun under the last Government but one, and continued under the last Government. It was an extraordinary thing, considering the hundreds of thousands of Londoners who at least once a week walked about the hills where the forts were, that they should be unaware of their erection, but the policy of erecting the forts had never been discussed by the House of Commons. He did not believe a single word was ever said in the House of Commons on the point. On the panic argument alone the small expenditure the forts involved was worth incurring, for undoubtedly, if we got into a serious war the Admiralty would have to send the fleet about in a way that neither the public nor the Press would understand, and pressure would be brought upon them at a time when they would be unable to tell the public the reasons for what they were doing. The public would be more likely to keep their heads under dangerous circumstances of the kind if they thought there was something between them and invasion other than a fleet which might not be in the Channel at all. The defence of the country against invasion must always be, under any circumstances, a protecting fleet, and if the Channel should be clear in the sense of the seas being clear of the British fleet—not in the sense that it was a certain distance off attacking the enemy's fleet—than, he was bound to say he did not believe any military defence would save the capital from invasion. He agreed that it would be an improvement in our military system if the Volunteers were formed into brigade divisions and were placed under the command of men who thoroughly understood their work. One ground of objection that might be taken by some hon. Members to the Government proposal was that the cost of our military system of defence was enormous with an inadequate result, and that a great deal more might be done with the money. That was a point, however, that might be discussed more satisfactorily when the Army Estimates were under consideration. He, however, did not think that this particular Bill was open to attack upon that ground, and as he believed that most of the proposals it contained were sound he should be prepared to support the Measure.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said that he most heartily joined the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down in his appreciation of the clearness and frankness of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War. He was quite certain that there could be no misapprehension with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's statement. It was most unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman's speech should have been delivered at an hour when the House was nearly empty, because if the House had been full it would have facilitated the Debate and would have saved any hon. Member from entertaining any misapprehension in reference to the subject. With regard to the acquisition of land for ranges and military manœuvres it was clear that if we desired to have an efficient Army we must have the means of training, not only our soldiers, but also the generals who were to command them. The advance that had been made in recent years in the range of our weapons rendered it absolutely necessary that we should acquire land for the purpose of shooting ranges, and therefore he could not understand any persons raising objections to the purchase of the necessary land by the Government, unless they belonged to that class who objected to our having any army at all. He should be surprised if any arguments were put forward against that part of the Bill. With regard to the barracks which it was proposed to build, he did not think that the carrying out of the works should be intrusted to the Royal Engineers, who, able and cultivated men as they were, had not the experience necessary to enable them to properly construct such buildings. Indeed, the consensus of military opinion, rightly or wrongly, was that the Royal Engineers were the last in whose hands the carrying out of the arrangements and the spending of the money should be placed. Next in importance came the question of mobilisation in the neighbourhood of London. He thought that if it were necessary to spend this sum of £200,000 as a sort of soothing syrup to the nerves of the people of London to induce them to believe that if the money were expended they would be secure from attack, the expenditure might be justified. In his view, however, the scheme could not be regarded as forming any part of the general system of defence upon which we should have to rely. His right hon. Friend was most particular in emphasising the fact that in other matters the Naval and Military authorities were agreed. Under the present Administration a great advance was being made towards unification of policy of the Naval and Military authorities, and he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who had preceded him that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet was beginning to show signs of life. They could not separate the question of defending London from the naval question—they could not do it. They could not have troops coming over from Boulogne without raising the question of transport, and that raised the naval question, before a foreign army could be placed on these shores. Therefore he should like to ask his right hon. Friend whether he had full and entire consent of the Committee of the Cabinet. They must have the whole subject and the numerous questions involved approached in a practical spirit, and practical conclusions come to before they could say whether invasion was a bugbear or whether it was not. He should not labour that point any more, but he should say they had wasted money enormously in the past from having no fixed principle whatever. They came down one night and passed votes for the Navy, altogether disregarding other factors; and then on another night they voted money for the Army, as if no Navy existed. They were now trying to improve on that, and he hoped they would get rid of those mixed and confused notions, which cost so much and which landed then in a sea of difficulties. When he looked at the military question he looked at it from the point of view of military operations carried on over sea; and the first thing they had to see to was the efficiency of the British Army in connection with sea transport. If they were going to incur a large expenditure for the purpose of training their army, he did not see why they should not kill two birds with one stone, and give their soldiers transport training. He should have thought they could have got land, less costly than land near London, on the coast of Wales, Scotland, or Ireland, where the land was much less valuable than land in England. What he contemplated was organising a brigade every year, and landing it on some of these coasts, the land to be acquired by the State; then, after the training in transport and other duties, bringing the brigade back again. He doubted whether the difference of cost would be very much, and he questioned whether the saving in land would not go a long way towards the cost of the sea transport. That very question of sea transport they could not get away from. It appeared in this matter they were still very much in the old rut. They looked on the Army and the Navy as abstract quantities, and until the Committee of the Cabinet came to be masters of the position and exercised that influence which they ought to exercise on the Admiralty and the War Office they could not say that they had arrived at a better state of things. One more point he wished to refer to—the amount demanded for fortifications by the Admiralty. He believed that if the Admiralty were responsible for the naval bases they would find that the naval bases could be secured from attack by a less amount being expended on fortifications than the military authorities thought necessary. They had the authority of the Defence Committee to say that the Navy undertook to secure all possessions abroad from organised invasion from the sea. That being so, all we had to protect our naval bases and coal stations against was predatory attack of a limited character. He was most anxious to know what increased garrisons this contemplated Vote would involve. He remembered hearing a Debate in the House of Lords when the programme was put forward, as a result of Lord Carnarvon's Commission, and the Duke of Cambridge then warned the country that they should be cautious as to what they did in regard to enormous fortifications, for, he said, they were making no provision respecting garrisons. He asked his right hon. Friend to say distinctly whether the £1,200,000 would be spent on fortifications, and what his estimate was of the increase of garrisons. If an increase of garrisons was intended, that meant an increase of the Army, and an increase of that portion of the Army which he believed was too big already—namely, that portion that was to sit down and wait until it was attacked. Every pound spent upon garrisons must be taken from the striking force of the Army, the part which had to go abroad to fight. He trusted the Measure would pass speedily through the House, but confessed that, while he approved generally of the Bill, he should feel it his duty to vote against the proposals in regard to the fortification of London.

MR. LOUGH viewed the proposals of the Government with considerable alarm, and thought such far-reaching suggestions as those laid before them somewhat suddenly might have been printed so that they could have considered them and been able to take a more intelligent part in the discussion than they could under present circumstances. When he read in the Queen's Speech:—

> "Your consent will be asked to provisions which, in the judgment of the military authorities, are required for adding to the efficiency of the military defences of the Empire,"

he did not anticipate that those provisions would be introduced at so early a period of the Session, and he did not expect anything so bad as the reality proved to be. They were asked for 5½ millions sterling, one million of which was to be spent on making certain of the most remote harbours in the United Kingdom impregnable—that was the word used by the right hon. Gentleman—three millions on barracks, and 1¼ million on proposals which the right hon. Gentleman very properly described as novel. He objected to each one of those proposals. [*Ironical cheers.*] They were told there were only two men in favour of economy, the Leader of the Opposition and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Leader of the Opposition was not present—[*Ministerial cheers*]—indeed there was no one on the front Opposition Bench—[*renewed cheers*]—to give any guidance to those who sat around him. He was sorry to say, too, that the Opposition Benches generally were comparatively tenantless—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and that the Irish Benches were absolutely deserted the whole time the right hon. Gentleman was speaking. He was glad, however, to see present one of the two ceonomists, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and he hoped they would hear a word or two from him. He objected to the effort to make the remote harbours impregnable. Hundreds of years ago martello towers were erected in remote parts to make the country impregnable. The attempt did not succeed.

If the attempt to make the coast impregnable did not succeed, the Government would merely say, "We must make another effort." He wished the proposals of the Government had not been so large. For instance, they asked for no less a sum than three millions for barracks. It had been said that they had their duties as well as rights in respect to the soldier, and he sympathised with the remark, and thought they ought to make the soldier as comfortable as possible in his quarters. ["Hear, hear!"] But what he objected to was that the proposals were not put before the House on a more moderate scale. Had the Government come for a more moderate sum each year for barracks he should not have objected; but to ask for £3,000,000 at one stroke for the purpose seemed to him to be an extravagant demand. And what was worse was that, notwithstanding the large increase of expenditure, they had no security whatever of effectiveness. But the most novel and startling of all the proposals submitted was that referring to the fortifications of London. They had heard of 13 strong places to be erected round the Metropolis. To him the proposal was a startling one, and he should like to have some information as to where these fortifications were to be built.

*Mr. BRODRICK: I explained, on the line of hills round London. I am afraid I cannot make my meaning clearer to the hon. Gentleman. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. LOUGH said that was not very definite. The line of hills round London embraced a circle of 120 miles; but what he wanted to know was where on those hills the 13 fortified places were to be erected. Was that the way the Government were going to expend money for the defence of the sea-coast? [*Laughter.*] Then it was proposed to spend half a million for rifle ranges although not a word of explanation had been vouchsafed to the House why the expenditure was necessary. ["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite might laugh, but many hon. Members on his side of the House, and the public outside, would demand further explanation than had been given on the point. Another half million was to be spent on providing training grounds for the troops, and it appeared that little heed had been taken of the fear expressed by the people last year when the Military Manœuvres Bill was before Parliament, lest the country was going to be turned into a vast camping-ground for military purposes. ["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial laughter.*] Again hon. Gentlemen opposite laughed, but the Bill was not passed. ["Hear, hear!"] The objection he wished to make was that this proposed expenditure was on too great a scale. For years they had been spending large sums on increasing the Navy, and many hon. Members had been induced to vote for this expenditure on the ground that by doing so they would save in that on the Army. He confessed that he was disappointed with the tone that had been taken by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean on this point. The right hon. Gentleman had always supported proposals for strengthening the Navy, but he had always thought that the right hon. Gentleman did so on the ground that the Army was much too costly, and that they might save on the Army a very large portion, at least, of the extra sums spent on the Navy. ["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] The expenditure on the Navy was now £21,000,000 a year, instead of £12,000,000 twenty years ago. Now, the Government having wrung some money out of the country for the Navy, turned round in the other direction to get more for the Army; contending, notwithstanding all that had been spent extra on the Navy, and the vast sums already spent on the Army that the country was still defenceless. At the present moment the amount expended on the Army was about £20,000,000 a year, and yet they had only a little army of 100,000 men—[*Ministerial cries of* "No, no!"]—he meant only an effective army of that number. France spent £25,000,000 on her army, but for that expenditure she secured an effective army of 600,000 men, with a practical reserve of over 2,000,000 men. He repeated that no security was given that, even if this large increase was granted, the country would have a thoroughly effective force. If judicious economy had been exercised the large sum granted for the Army last year might have been made to go much further than it had done, and in no administrative work of the Government was the hand of economy needed more than in that of the Army. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1860 the total Vote for the Army was £14,750,000, and the force was 5,000 more than at present. It seemed to him, therefore, that the more they spent on the Army the less effective it became. ["Hear, hear!" *and Ministerial laughter.*] He looked with suspicion on such serious proposals of increased expenditure at so early a stage of the Session, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would adopt a suggestion which had been made and provide hon. Members with a paper giving adequate information, and would give them an opportunity of considering it, before launching definitely on this increased expenditure. ["Hear, hear!"]

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) said that in the matter of the proposed fortifications round London the Government were either going to do too much or too little. If they were going to build a few blockhouses round London they would lead the people to believe that there were fortifications on which they could depend. The experience of Paris did not commend itself as an example to be followed. He was very much afraid that they would be placing their dependence on these fortifications, and considering them rather than increasing the efficiency of their active forces. It seemed to him much more important to increase the efficiency of their Army than to devote themselves to fortifications. With regard to the proposal as to barracks, he must say he thought it was high time they did spend some money on them. The hon. Gentleman opposite complained that they were going to spend £3,000,000 at one time upon barracks, but he would point out that that was because they had been neglecting to spend money for so many years past. They had now to meet the neglect of all those years. He could not help thinking it was very desirable that they should purchase and own a ground for manœuvring. It was one of the great objections to Aldershot that after three or four years had been spent at that station everyone knew the ground and there was nothing fresh about it. If that was so, was there not the same danger if they purchased and had one fixed ground for training. While it was desirable to have a ground of their own for training, was it not important that their troops should go over new ground every year, and that they should be trained on ground which was unknown to them. He was thoroughly with the Under Secretary in the matter of decentralisation. He had seen great confusion arise simply because instead of decentralisation, instead of the officer commanding the troops being able to make his own arrangements for his stores, separate and independent bodies dealt with those stores. Let them have decentralisation and their Army would be much more efficient.

Mr. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead) said it seemed to him that this money was requested on the assumption that forts were required for London. He held that the insular position of Great Britain rendered Great Britain practically invulnerable. Provided they could hold the seas, provided they could smash any fleet in the Channel or elsewhere with their fleet, there need be no fear of invasion. Then there was this point. No nation, he cared not what nation it was, could invade this country for the simple reason they had not got transport enough to carry the troops. Granted that their fleet was smashed up in the Channel what was their position? There was no need to invade the country at all. All the enemy had got to do was to block their ports and they would be "end up" in six weeks. They would be brought down to their knees by starvation. Grant that London was invested. He asked in all seriousness how long could they feed the population? He should have liked to see the Under Secretary bringing in something more practical. He quite agreed with the necessity of fortifications, but there was something far and away beyond that. Where were their national storehouses of food to feed their soldiers and their millions of inhabitants? They were beginning at the wrong end of the stick. He cared not for the money so long as it was for the safety of the Empire, but he held that a nation would go down if it could not feed its population and defend itself. He would have liked to see the advisers of the Under Secretary lay down a plan of large storehouses from which in case of invasion, they could feed the population. If they could not feed the population what was the use of their forts?

There would be no fear of invasion so long as we kept up a strong Navy and ample Naval reserves, though if it should come to pass that the nation generally had to take to soldiering, each man would shoulder his rifle and certainly make as good a soldier as the French conscript. But the weakness of Great Britain was that she could not supply national food for two months. What, then, was the use of spending all this money for forts around London? He did not object to spending money for necessary military works and barracks; he did not object to fortification of our coaling stations; indeed, he had advanced this in the House, and still thought that in the want of fortifications for our coaling stations was a source of weakness. But the military advisers of the Department were shortsighted in paying attention only to the southern coasts of England and Ireland. Why neglect the west coast of Scotland? Why not fortify some of those natural harbours we had—for instance at Mull, where a whole fleet could be hidden? Did not history tell of the not unsuccessful exploits of Paul Jones? As he had said before he said again—he knew no Party in this matter. ["Hear, hear!"] He had no objection to spending money to maintain the greatness of the Empire—he was a Radical Imperialist. ["Hear, hear!"] But the problem he commended to the consideration of the Department was how to provide national storehouses, how to feed our population in the event of a great war. ["Hear, hear!"]

Colonel WELBY (Taunton), as a practical soldier, realised the value of the announcement made by the Under Secretary and the grasp the right hon. Gentleman had shown of the requirements of the Army. Whether it be on his own initiative or as the mouthpiece of the Defence Committee, every practical soldier would be indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for his statement. ["Hear, hear!"] In his criticism of some of the details the hon. Member (Mr. Lough) seemed to have forgotten that new weapons had been invented that would carry three or four miles, and if the hon. Gentleman had any doubt of the range, let him spend his summer holiday two miles from these new weapons. As to the hon. Gentleman's remarks about martello towers, he should be aware that these were never intended for more than the prevention of the landing of a small foreign force, and no more intended to make a coast impregnable than the military canal through Romney Marsh was intended to make New Romney impregnable. He was glad to find it was intended to use a large portion of Salisbury Plain for the manœuvring of troops. Undoubtedly it would be better to manœuvre on fresh ground each year, but the objections and difficulties in doing this were well known. They must get what they could, and though it might become well known, a space of 40 miles square would be a useful ground.

*Mr. BRODRICK explained that he spoke of 40 square miles, not 40 miles square.

Colonel WELBY said the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth wished to have money spent in embarking troops, but in his experience this did not require much training. It would be well if it were possible to train troops not to suffer from sea-sickness. The hon. Member for Gateshead had dwelt upon what no doubt was the great difficulty in defending London, the finding of food for the population. If London were completely encircled and the port closed by a fleet, London would be starved, perhaps in a fortnight, being such a large place. But he would point out that there was a strategical possibility of the invasion of this country. There might be a fleet or combination of fleets sufficiently strong not to hold the whole of the seas, but to block the two ends of the British Channel. With a fleet at each end the waterway would be free, and an army could pass from France into England and an invasion might take place, while the rest of the sea might be sufficiently open for large convoys of provisions to come in which would enable this country to struggle against the invaders for a few weeks. The result of that struggle, he believed, would be that the foreigner would be hurled back across the seas. He thought, with regard to the item for barracks, that the words which had fallen from the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, should be considered by everybody. He did not know that there was any other Member in the House who had such a wonderful and intimate knowledge of the details of the army and navy, and of foreign armies and the larger principle of organisation. The right hon. Baronet had pointed out that this money, which was to be devoted to the defence of London and the building of barracks, should be expended in a systematic way. They had got no organisation at the present time. Surely it could not be that in this country they had got no organiser of sufficient capacity to work out a scheme to which they could look forward in the future. They could not perhaps, find all the money for carrying out the scheme immediately, but they could have the details and principles of it and work up to it. With regard to the spending of money on the fortification of London, the Under Secretary said that he looked upon it as part of a large scheme of decentralisation. He seemed to look upon it as a system of building some fortified camps round London which were going to be centres of organisation, and therefore, decentralisation of the present system. It seemed to him, however, not so much decentralisation as extension of the centralisation which existed at the present time. Whatever it be, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would look carefully into the question and see whether the money to be devoted to the defence of London and the building of barracks could not be spent in a systematic way. The problem of organisation was a difficult and complicated one to face, but there must be military advisers of the Crown who could work out a real system to which they could look forward in the future. If the money was spent with regard to such a scheme as that, he could only say that any objection which he had to this small amount of money being spent on the defence of London—he believed insufficient because it would only repel a very small invasion—would be instantly removed.

*MR. WEIR, while congratulating the right hon. Gentleman on his statement thought it would have been much better had it been published and placed in the hands of hon. Members some time before the discussion came on. He complained that the right hon. Gentleman and his advisers had not paid sufficient attention to the West Coast of Scotland, which was in need of more adequate protection. An enemy's ships at the present time could very easily make an entrance through the North West Coast of Scotland. At present there was nothing to prevent an enemy's ships from gaining access to the Pentland Firth, and steps ought to be taken to strengthen the ports on the north west side of Scotland, so that they might be available for naval purposes. He was glad that provision was to be made for the erection of better quarters for our soldiers than wooden huts. Too many of the existing huts were insanitary, rotten, and worm-eaten. It was also well that there should be an improvement in married soldiers' quarters. He approved of the proposed expenditure on rifle ranges. Ranges for the new Lee-Metford rifle were wanted all over the country. If there were only a few such ranges, the cost of conveying men to the places where the ranges were situated would in the long run cost more than the £500,000 now asked for. The item of the proposed expenditure which was open to criticism, was the sum allocated to the defence of London. It was too small for effective purposes, and, instead of their present plan, the Military Authorities might just as well surround London with a number of ginger beer bottles filled with powder. To expend only £96,000 on the defence of London would be simply playing with the question. Effective defences would cost eight or nine millions. To prepare defences for London similar to those that existed round Paris at the time of the German siege would be of very little use.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st January], "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases."—(*The Attorney General.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) asked what were the intentions of the Government with regard to Ireland in these cases?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) said he would consult the Attorney General for Ireland and the Chief Secretary as to whether any exception could be made in the case of Ireland.

Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley, and the Solicitor General.

Bill presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 101.]

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND) ACT (1885) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. T. M. HEALY, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, explained that it was intended to settle a difference which had arisen between two Judicial Commissioners of great eminence in Ireland as to certain intentions of a pious founder in an educational endowment. As the Act was at present drawn there were no means of settling this difference and bringing it to a close. He was quite willing to accept the suggestion that the difference between the two Judges should be remitted in the first place to the Irish Privy Council, a body which would have to settle the scheme finally. But in any case it was absurd to allow the Act to remain a dead letter. He moved that the Bill be now read a Second time.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said the Government were not opposed to the principle of the Bill. He was by no means certain that the method proposed for settling the question was the best that could be suggested, and he should reserve on the part of the Government the right after Second Reading to move extensive Amendments, and, if it should turn out that the Bill as it stood could not be amended in the sense the Government desired, he should further reserve the right to oppose the Bill at a later stage.

*MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) was sorry the Government had given its assent to the Second Reading. This was another attempt to meddle with Protestant endowments in Ireland. Erasmus Smith made a certain endowment for a number of Protestant children in Ireland, and the matter was before two eminent Judges, the Protestant Judge taking one view and the Roman Catholic Judge another view, and the result was that the endowment remained as it was originally intended by the will of the founder. He trusted the Government would pause before they inflicted another blow upon, and fresh discouragement to, the loyal people in Ireland who had done their utmost to uphold the union and integrity of the Empire.

Bill read a Second time and commited for Monday next.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question proposed [26th January.] "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Question again proposed.—Debate resumed.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said the Bill contained a dangerous principle, because it proposed to change the Criminal Law, and that without discussion in the House. It introduced for the first time, with perhaps one exception, the principle that a man must prove his innocence; whereas the cardinal principle of the English Criminal Law was that every man charged with crime must be taken to be innocent until his guilt had been proved by process of law. The possible exception to this cardinal principle was a recent decision of the Judges to the effect that once it has been proved that any property has been stolen, then if anybody is in recent possession of it, the duty is cast upon him of showing how he came into such possession. That was a sufficient safeguard against any crime on the part of a receiver, but here it was proposed, not by the Government but by a private Member, that before anything was proved to have been stolen at all, anybody might be charged, with having in his possession or conveying anything which might be reasonably suspected of being stolen or unlawfully obtained, and without appeal, sentenced to a term of imprisonment. The Bill also imposed a penalty on anyone who might be reasonably suspected of having "unlawfully obtained" goods. Where were those words to be met with in the criminal law? It was only under the game laws that a man could be punished under suspicion; and it was too much to ask the House nowadays to extend the principle of legislation passed when every Member of the House was a game preserver. To read the Bill a Second time would be to affirm an objectionable principle, which could not be eliminated in Grand Committee. He hoped the Attorney General would say that this dangerous amendment of the criminal law ought not to be made on the motion of a private Member.

SIR BENJAMIN STONE said that this was not a new enactment. The provisions of the Bill were already in force in Manchester, Liverpool and other large towns. It was simply convenient to make the law of general application.

***MR. REES DAVIES** (Pembrokeshire), said that he had been asked by the chief constable of his county to communicate with the hon. Gentleman as to the provisions of the Bill. But unless the Bill received the assent of the Attorney General it would be extremely dangerous for the House to give to it a Second Reading, as it involved a serious change in the Criminal Law of the Country. The onus of proof was shifted from the Crown to the prisoner. It would very much enlarge the powers of the police, and might render possible a system of police espionage—he invited the Attorney General to give his opinion on it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said that he was not satisfied that this was an amendment of the law which ought to be made at the instigation of a private Member. He had always held that alterations of the criminal law ought to be made on the responsibility of the Government. But, on the other hand, what the Bill proposed was already the law in London, Liverpool, and other towns, and it was supposed by the promoters that there was a need for the extension of that law. He did not approve of the drafting of the Bill; but the Home Secretary had promised to consider this subject to see if an alteration of the law were desirable; and certainly, by reading this Bill a Second time the Government would not be bound to assent to the principle of the Measure.

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) thought it startling to be told that in London and other towns, by means of private Acts, clauses had been inserted which really gave a scope to the criminal law wider than that of the general law of the land. The introduction of a Bill of this kind showed the need that existed for exercising a close watch over the Bills introduced by private Members which proposed to make changes in the law. Unless that strict scrutiny was observed it might happen that different towns would have different codes of law.

MR. LOUGH thought that hon. Gentlemen opposite ought to take care that their Bills were in a proper shape before they submitted them to the House. But the Attorney General had not only condemned the bad drafting of the Bill, but laid down two propositions—first, that the principle of the Bill was one that the House should not be asked to accept hastily; and secondly, that it was not right that a Bill proposing a change in the law should be introduced by a private Member. These were weighty pronouncements, and he wondered they had not led to the immediate withdrawal of the Bill. They had had some experience in Ireland of persons being prosecuted on suspicion. It was now proposed to introduce that principle into England and Wales. It was very difficult for anyone to get through life without being suspected of something or another. [*Laughter.*] Even hon. Members were constantly suspected of having bad motives behind everything they did. [*Laughter.*] He therefore thought the Bill was one that should never have been introduced.

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (Monmouth, N.) said the only point that had been made on behalf of the Bill was that it would make the law uniform all over the country—that the main clause of the Bill already existed in many local Acts. But that was not quite correct. When the Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations passed the clause in respect to London, they knew that any cases that might arise would come before the police magistrates. In this Bill the authority was not a police magistrate, or a stipendiary magistrate, but it applied to all cases which might come before an ordinary justice of the peace. By it a working man who was walking along a country road with a hare in his hand might be suspected by a policeman of poaching, and taken before a justice of the peace whose property had recently suffered from poaching depredations. In this way the workman, who might have bought the hare from a friend—[*laughter*]—might be unjustly and summarily convicted and sent to prison.

*MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim N.) said it appeared to him this Bill introduced a rather extraordinary innovation in criminal law.

MR. DUNCOMBE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put the Question.

Mr. Lough.

*MR. PATRICK M'HUGH said the hon. Member for South Tyrone, in last October, told them that he would not like to see Ireland in the position of Lazarus, appealing for crumbs at the gate of Dives. Was this crumb to be refused to Ireland? If it were as good as its supporters said, why not extend it to Ireland? He held it was a bad Bill. They knew a great deal about reasonable suspicions in Ireland, and many people in that country had been unreasonably suspected and had served long terms of imprisonment under the Coercion Act. What was unjustly enforced in Ireland might be unjustly enforced in England. Many people would not be able to explain how they got possession of certain articles which were found upon them. It would be impossible for the people of this country to be sure that great injustice would not be done in many instances, as they would have to rely on the discretion of the policeman. The discretion of the police in Ireland was sometimes very small, but small as it was it was superior to that of the police in this country, as the Celtic race was admittedly superior to the Saxon in intelligence. [*Laughter.*] He ventured to think that some of the rural justices before whom these cases would come were rather stupid and they were a selfish class. He appealed to the hon. Gentleman opposite not to do away with the right of a citizen to be tried by twelve of his peers. [*Ministerial laughter.*] It was the right of every freeborn citizen to be deemed innocent until he was proved to be guilty. It was not a right they had always enjoyed in Ireland. But a discussion of affairs in Ireland would not be germane to the Motion. [*Ministerial laughter.*] It would be a fatal blow to the recognised rights of citizens of this Empire if, by a Bill of this kind, the liberty of the subject were left to the discretion of a policeman or a rural justice. He was surprised that a Member of the Party which were supposed

—wrongfully in his own opinion—[*laughter*]—to be the bulwark of law and order should get up and try to force through a Bill like this in opposition to the opinion of the English Attorney General. What was the good of having an Attorney General—[*loud Ministerial laughter*]—and paying him a large salary; also a Solicitor General? [*Renewed laughter.*] Why should the country be asked, and the Irish people especially, to contribute to the sustenance of these gentlemen, when they found, on a grave and vital question such as this, the opinions of those grave and learned seignors—[*loud laughter*]—were not accepted by their followers?

MR. FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorks, Shipley) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.—Debate resumed:—

*MR. PATRICK M'HUGH said that, supposing he had in his possession a box of cigars or cigarettes he did not wish to account for—[*laughter*]—was he to be hauled before a magistrate because a policeman took it into his head to unreasonably suspect him? [*Renewed laughter.*] The policeman might not be able to understand the position in which he found himself, and he might be sent to the common gaol. If this Bill were passed many respectable men and ladies—[*laughter*]—might be sent to the common gaol, and—

MR. J. W. MACLURE (Lancs, Stretford) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.—Debate resumed.

*MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: And compelled to associate with burglars and wife beaters. It would be a disgrace to the House and to the party of law and order if such a Bill were passed.

The hon. Member was speaking at Twelve o'clock, when the Debate was adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Monday next.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS) COMMITTEE.

SIR WILLIAM WALROND (Devon, Tiverton) moved:—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the Department of the Serjeant-at-Arms attending this House; that the Committee do consist of 17 Members; that Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Richard Cavendish, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Thomas Curran, Mr. Horatio Davies, General Goldsworthy, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Lafone, Mr. Llewellyn, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Macdona, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. William Redmond, and Lord Stanley, be Members of the Committee."

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said that he wished to put a question to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General with regard to what the hon. and learned Gentleman himself had declared to be the illegal practice of selling intoxicating liquors at the bars in that building. He wanted to know what had been done with regard to the matter since the hon. and learned Gentleman had made his statement on the subject, when he informed the House that he had looked into the law relating to it, and had found that the sale of drink at the bars was thoroughly illegal. That was a week ago, and yet he had not heard of anybody having been arrested and taken before the Court. Neither had he heard that the Inland Revenue had taken any proceedings in the matter. It was not right for this sort of thing to be allowed to go on without there being any legal right to sell drink in the building. He wished to know what was going to be done in the matter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) said that the statement of the hon. Baronet was quite correct, and he could only repeat what he had already said—namely, that as the sale of liquor in the House was now carried on it was not according to law, but he said it was obvious that no action could be taken in the matter until the Kitchen Committee was appointed. Several courses would be open to them. They might say it was desirable to confine the sale of liquor in the House solely to Members of the House, in which case a very large question would arise in point of law. They might, however, think it convenient that liquor should be sold to witnesses and others attending the House, and come to the conclusion that the existing practice, which had been working for upwards of 60 years, should be legalised. And again, they might decide to make a change with regard to the way in which the sale was carried on. The matter had not been overlooked, and he was in communication with the Home Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and some of the proposed members of the Committee with regard to it.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the department of the Sergeant-at-Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of,—Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Richard Cavendish, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Thomas Curran, Mr. Horatio Davies, General Goldsworthy, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Lafone, Mr. Llewellyn, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Macdona, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. William Redmond, and Lord Stanley.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

Attorney General.

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND).

Bill to afford facilities for the establishment and development of Industries in Ireland, Ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, Mr. Lough, and Mr. Knox; presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 102.]

BRITISH TRADE AND FOREIGN COMPETITION.

On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House,

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the Board of Trade how it was that the Report on British Trade and Foreign Competition, prepared by Sir Courtenay Boyle, the Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade, on "The Comparative Statistics of Population, Industry and Commerce in the United Kingdom and some leading foreign countries," which was laid yesterday upon the Table of the House, had appeared in *The Times* of that day, while hon. Members were unable to obtain a copy? He wished also to know when the Report would be in the hands of hon. Members.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon) said that he did not know how the Report came to be published in *The Times*. Had he sent out the Report he should have seen that it was sent to all the newspapers. He was unable to say when the Report, which was in the hands of the printers, could be furnished to hon. Members, but no time would be lost in the matter.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at Ten minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 1st February 1897.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table; the same was ordered to be printed.—[No. 5.]

THOMPSON'S DIVORCE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to dissolve the marriage of Agnes Weir Thompson, the wife of Abraham Thompson, of Belfast, in the county of Antrim, solicitor, with the said Abraham Thompson, and to enable her to marry again, and for other purposes: Presented (on petition), and a copy of the proceedings in and of the decree of divorce of the Probate and Matrimonial Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, delivered (on oath); Bill read 1ª; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday the 2nd of March next. The usual orders were made.

COMPANIES BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Companies Act was presented by the Earl of Dudley; read 1ª; and to be printed.—[No. 7.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (WOMEN) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for extending the Parliamentary franchise to women, was presented by the Viscount Templetown; read 1ª, and to be printed.—[No. 8.]

INDIAN FAMINE.

*LORD KINNAIRD rose to ask Her Majesty's Government what were the number of relief camps at present established in the famine districts in India, and at what distance they were situated apart; whether the Government could state how often each relief camp was visited by a British official or other European member of committee; whether they could furnish statistics showing the increase of mortality in the famine districts during the past few months; whether the Indian Government were taking any measures to store grain in remote districts more than 30 miles from a railway or large navigable river; whether the Government still declined to store and sell grain, and resolved to leave the safety of such remote tracts to the action of private individuals; whether such a policy of abstention was not essayed both in Orissa in 1866 and in Southern India in 1877; and whether the result was not in both cases that the price mounted to five and, in some cases, ten times their ordinary figure, followed by uncontrollable calamity and hundreds and thousands of deaths. He said that he wished to refer shortly to the experience gained in past famines, especially in the famine of 1877. In that year it appeared

> "that prices were quoted week after week at five and six times and even eight times those ordinarily current, yet the same cold meaningless formulas were week after week published, 'supply sufficient,' 'supply middling,' 'supply fair,' 'supply plentiful,' 'supply enough.' As if this could by any possibility be the case contemporaneously with a continuation of such prices. In only one district, Kaladgi, was it occasionally hinted that the supply was defective. Early in January, 1877, the prices there were quadrupled."

Yet no steps were taken by the Government to import food.

> "The month of August found the Viceroy officially announcing that the price of food averaged five times, in many parts eight times, that of ordinary years; it was admitted that success had not attended the efforts to save life. Success indeed had become impossible in the face of that one cardinal error of non-importation. The Madras Relief Committee was then telegraphing to the Lord Mayor. 'Middle classes exhausted, owing to famine prices,' and even in towns and centres of civilisation, those below the middle classes were dying in thousands. In the one district of Salem half-a-million persons were missing, the greater majority of whom had perished from starvation. In the more distressed parts of Madras it was officially admitted that probably about 20 per cent. of the population had disappeared, and in those of Bombay about 12 per cent. It was, at the close of the famine, officially recorded that in 25 distressed taluks: 10 in Bombay, and 15 in Madras—855,000 persons out of a population of less than five millions were missing."

These records showed that the questions standing in his name on the Paper, referred to a subject which called for immediate attention. In paragraph 42 of the Famine Code, it was laid down that—

> "Only in very exceptional cases, and in the last resort, will Government take direct action to import grain, and Government will not interfere with private trade, so long as that trade is able and willing to place food at reasonable prices, within the reach of the distressed people. If compelled to interfere because grain is not in, or is withheld from a local market, Government will do so only until the ordinary course of trade is restored."

It seemed that Government did not contemplate taking any steps merely on the ground of high prices. Thus, if again, as in 1877, prices should rise to five or six times that of a good year, and should be impossible for the great majority, and if at the same time, as in 1877, supplies should be officially returned as "sufficient, plentiful, fair," no action would be taken. Nor did it seem that Government would take action in any case save in "very exceptional cases and in the last resort." If Government was to wait for that stage, and only then to set about making purchases in distant lands, how were the people to subsist during the month or six weeks that would certainly elapse between the inception of Government action, and the arrival of the grain in remote parts? Those parts would always be the ones most difficult of access, to which transport would take longest. It was only by being already prepared, by having stores available in remote parts to be drawn upon at once on the occurrence of such a condition of things, that a disaster could be averted. And high prices should be an essential element in deciding Government when to open its stores. If it were when importing to declare that its price would be 18 lbs. per rupee (a price never yet exceeded for long without a grievous calamity) and that it would never move from that, private trade would have a degree of security and certainty concerning its operation which now with "corners" and "rigging" it had not. So much merchants admitted; but they were terrified at the idea of Government changing its rate from time to time—a fatal policy. Government had, in accordance with the policy thus laid down in its Famine Code, refrained from importation and sale. It had at the same time assembled huge masses of people on to its works—in some cases about 30,000 on a work of no very great extent. The only provision the Code made for securing that the money wage paid these workers could procure grain, was this:—

> "One or more contractors may be appointed for each circle by the collector."

But this contractor was not a salaried servant, and he, himself a local grain dealer, could surrender at a moment's notice. There was nothing to prevent him from breaking his contract, and leaving the labourers one morning with nothing to eat. There was nothing to prevent him from doing this at any moment in case of a combination among dealers. Of course he might be proceeded against in the Civil Courts, but of what avail would litigation of that sort be in saving life? Two mornings ago, Reuter's agent reported from Bijapur, a work with 5,000 persons on it where no provisions were supplied, the labourers having to come into Bijapur, six miles, to effect the necessary purchases. And so far, we were only at the beginning of the difficulties. The Secretary of State in his Dispatch of 15th Jan. 1897, recognised that, in October last, in 74 districts the cheapest kinds of grain were dearer than 20 lbs. per rupee. He anticipated that distress would increase till April, possibly to the end of May, and would not subside till August or September. He approved the decision of the Indian Government "to abstain from any interference with the operations of the grain trade," and added—

> "its operations, so long as they are effective, must not be subjected to competition by Government agency."

No one would for a moment suggest anything else than what was contained in this last sentence; but it was where, by absence of supplies or by impossible prices, private trade showed that its operations were not effective, that Government must sell if a whole population was not either to starve or to be brought on to the relief works, and the calamity was to be checked from becoming uncontrollable. If that was so, it followed necessarily, that Government must be already prepared with its stores on the spot, which stores it must have already imported from distant lands. As yet, no steps had been taken in that direction. The supplies of these distant lands had apparently not yet been drawn on for the wants of India.

> "I don't gather that supplies of food are yet coming into the distressed districts from Burma, Madras or Siam,"

wrote the Secretary of State on the 15th January, 1897. The reason was natural enough. Prices in those parts had already, owing to demands which India was ordinarily wont to supply, risen much; they left but a narrow margin for the private traders' profit after damage and freight had been paid; and then there were the further risks of the grain not proving popular (a risk which the intimate knowledge of Government officials would go far to obviate), the difficulty of carriage into remote parts, and a hundred other difficulties which it required a very large possible profit to encourage a private trader to face. The results so far of the present policy on this point had been that, in accordance with the prophecy of the Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Provinces on the 30th September, prices had been—

> "driven up altogether out of the reach of large numbers of the poorer ryots (cultivators with holdings of their own), agricultural labourers, artisans and others."

They had been thrown on the hands of the Government for relief. Others would gradually be swept into the spreading vortex. On the 23rd November he reported "prices phenomenally high, and prices of coarsest and best food grains approximating as they do in famines." Prices had in many parts of the afflicted districts for three months not been more favourable than 16 and 17 lbs. per rupee. These presumably were the official prices of the grain markets; in the remote parts they would, if that were so, be much higher. The numbers on relief had risen to two millions, showing thus early great and widespread exhaustion among classes who should have stood out much longer. On the 28th October 1896, the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces wrote:—

> "With exhausted stocks deficient harvests, and the pressure of a load o lebt, which had steadily grown during the succession of unfavourable years, it is not surprising that the feeling of the agricultural population should be one of great despondency, almost of despair, and that the position of the landless classes should cause the gravest anxiety."

From Behar in October, combinations of grain dealers were reported—they withheld supplies for some days. The Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab in November reported combinations of grain dealers and rising prices. The Lieut.-Governor of Bengal on November 18th sent a long report to the Government of India, dealing more especially with the condition of Behar. Contrasting it with the Behar of 1874, when there was the famine, he pointed out the enormous spread of railways throughout the province of Behar in the last 20 years (589 miles as against 147) and added—

> "But though there are many grounds for confidence which did not exist in 1873-74, the fact cannot be overlooked that there are also fresh grounds for anxiety. Prices of food grains have steadily risen during the past two years, and are now higher than they ever have been before; this fact, coupled with the facts already mentioned, that wages have not risen proportionally to prices; that the purchasing power of the poorer classes has therefore, been steadily diminishing, and is now less than ever it was; that whereas in former years of scarcity prices were kept down by importation from the North Western Provinces and lower Bengal, in the present year, supplies from these sources cannot be confidently relied upon—are all circumstances that give fresh cause for anxiety, which had no existence in 1873-74."

The Lieut.-Governor proceeded to remark that it was estimated that there was a deficit of 550,000 tons of grain in Behar for the year's provision, and while hoping that this estimate might prove exaggerated, he added—

> "if private trade does not step in in time to supply the deficit, there may be at any time a panic, and a sudden rise in prices. The question whether private trade will do all that is required is in reality the *crux* of the situation."

He pointed out, that to relieve the situation, the importations must come from beyond the sea (this, two months later the Secretary of State said, had not been done)—

> "Because the high prices in Eastern Bengal, and the indications of distress already existing in districts that were always considered free from risk of scarcity, show that little reliance can be placed on supplies from within the province of Bengal."

He laid great stress on the loophole in the Famine Commissioners' Report :—

> "A resolution to rely on the ordinary operations of trade to meet the wants of the country, unquestionably rests, not only on the activity of traders, but also on the probability of the requisite supplies of food being forthcoming at the critical time."
>
> "They admitted—" he added—"that there may be cases in which Government interference is admissible, such as for the purpose of providing food required for payment of wages on relief works, and distribution of gratuitous relief stimulating trade when it is sluggish or fails to act, or grain dealers combine and refuse to sell."

The conclusion he arrived at was—

> "That there is ground for confidence that the food wants of the provinces will be met by private trade."

These hopes he built on anticipated importations from Burma, importations which two months later the Secretary of State pointed out had not taken place. He added—

> "It is necessary to repeat that, in view of the unparalleled highness of prices, and of extent of the area over which there has been shortness of crops throughout India, the situation as regards the food supply is not free, even in Bengal, from elements of doubt and anxiety."

These doubts should now have become intensified. It appeared that in parts of three of the Behar districts, Champaran, Mozuffirput, and Darbhanga, communications were still defective. These were generally large exporting districts, and were therefore without any native machinery for import. Exports, arranged for beforehand in all probability, were in November still going forward there, though it was in these parts the failure had been greatest, and prices were between 15 and 18 lbs. per rupee. The planters of Mozufferpur were arranging for importing 1,500 tons of rice from Rangoon for sale on easy terms to their villagers. The Maharaja of Darbhanga was similarly arranging for 5,000 tons for sale on favourable terms to his tenants ; but inasmuch as this was being bought locally, it might have had the undesirable effect of shortening supplies in the markets and raising prices. These gentlemen, so intimately acquainted with the wants of the peasantry on their estates acted thus so far back as November, and they could only have done so from the knowledge that private trade was not, and would not place grain in the market at possible prices. They knew, as all experience showed, that to store and sell grain to the peasantry at possible prices was the best, and indeed the only way of staving off an almost universal destitution. The Government, who in India was more emphatically than in any other country the one great landlord still declined to move in this direction. These gentlemen were no more grain dealers than the Government was ; but close acquaintance with the necessities of the case compelled them to turn to. Of one district, Khulna, in Lower Bengal, the Lieut.-Governor, on the 20th November, reported that he had just heard from the Commissioner that relief must be started in one sub-division, that the price of rice in the bazaars was 12 to 14 lbs. per rupee, and that these were merely fancy prices as the grain was not forthcoming in any quantities even at that price :—

Lord Kinnaird.

> "If the state of things is so bad in Khulna, with its abundant waterways and its proximity to Calcutta, it is only probable that the condition of things in more distant places may be equally bad."

As to the chance of private trade doing all that was required, which was to keep prices down, even in the most out-of-the-way parts to a rate not dearer than 18 lbs. of common food per rupee, which all experience showed must not be passed, and cannot long be passed, without an uncontrollable calamity, the following are not unimportant considerations. Wheat and rice were probably the main food stuffs in question—rice in the more eastern and southern of the affected districts, wheat in those more to the north-west. The Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, with the best information before him, wrote to the Government of India on the 18th November as follows :—

> "Cargoes of Californian wheat of 4,000 to 5,000 tons each can be landed in Calcutta at Rs. 5 to Rs. 5.1 per maund. Offers for such cargoes to arrive in two months or more are not higher than Rs. 4.10 to Rs. 4.11 a fact which indicates, in the opinion of merchants, the price of wheat will not in Calcutta rise beyond Rs. 4.10 to 4.11 within the next two months."

But these were wholesale and not retail prices; the retail price in Calcutta, to admit of any profit at that time, would be quite Rs. 5 per maund, or 16 lbs. per rupee. It appeared from the above that Californian wheat could not be imported at a less cost than Rs. 5 per maund at the seaboard, which would mean quite Rs. 5. 8. before reaching the railway stations in the North West, and Rs. 6 before penetrating into the remote parts. Then a profit would have to be made by the retail vendor, and his risks had to be covered, so that Rs. 6½ was probably the price at which private trade could afford to import and retail wheat in the interior of the North West Provinces. This would mean about 12 lbs per rupee. As to rice, the same authority on the same date wrote that new coarse Burma rice (which was not much in favour) could be obtained at Rangoon (for delivery in two months or later) at Rs 3. 8. per maund, or Rs. 4. 8. at Calcutta. This would mean quite Rs. 5 at any central railway station in Behar, and quite Rs. 6 before the retail vendor in remote parts could hope to secure a profit. That would be about 13½ lbs. per rupee. Thus, so far as he could see, there was no chance, and since November there had been no chance, of private trade being able to import and retail the grain in common use at such a price as was possible for the people, or as could possibly hope to stave off the spread of a calamity which threatened to become almost universal. In this connection too it must be remembered that, as Sir Lepel Griffin pointed out the other day in a letter to *The Times*, the savings of the cultivators of India were always largely invested in the silver ornaments of their women. These formed their savings bank. Hitherto, in all famine times, these had been turned into rupees for the purchase of grain. The price they had fetched in rupees had been the value of the silver. Now things were different. The Government by closing the mints had put the rupee 25 p.c. above the value of the silver it contained, and the cultivator now, in order to get 4 rupees, would have to sell the silver of five. His means of purchasing were thus materially reduced, and the 18 lb. price of which he had spoken as one which previous experience showed could not be materially passed, became now, owing to the above circumstance, all the more emphatically so. The Secretary of State, in his Dispatch of January 15 to the Viceroy, stated :—

> "I do not gather that supplies of food are yet coming from Burma, Madras, or Siam," but added, "I question if Indian prices are as yet high enough to attract wheat or corn maize from the West."

Thus it would seem certain that private trade would not in the present distress move to help materially by importation of foreign grain except prices for common grain in the interior rose to about 12 or 13 lbs. per rupee. But this was a price which must at all hazards be prevented. It could only be prevented at a loss to the importers; and Government was alone the importer who could afford the loss, and who was bound to incur it.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (The Earl of Onslow) said he was sorry that he could not give the noble Lord any information as to the exact number of relief camps in existence. He could say, however, that each relief work was under a responsible officer who visited that relief work constantly. The numbers engaged on the relief works varied from 100 or 200 to 28,000 or 30,000, and some of those works were under the charge of the local zemindars, who did most excellent service in a recent famine. The Government had certain statistics as to the mortality in certain districts of the Jabalpur division, and these showed that there was a large mortality in some of the autumn months of last year due mainly to cholera or fever, but that mortality had been decreasing. They had desired the Government of India to supply information, shortly and roughly as it must necessarily be, from time to time whenever there was any considerable increase of mortality above the normal. As to measures for the storage of grain, it was perfectly true that it was the policy of former Governments for a short time to import themselves grain into the distressed districts, but the result of that was found to be unsatisfactory in the famine of 1876. Towards the close of the year—the Government ceased to import grain into the districts, and the consequence was that as soon as Government competition had disappeared the private traders were encouraged to take up and continue their operations, and at one time no less than 4,000 tons a day were poured into the famine districts until the railways were carrying as much as it was possible for them to carry. With the experience which the Government of India had of several famines they had determined to lay down the principle that they would not interfere with private trade so long as private trade was able to supply the necessities of the people. Cases were described as exceptional in the Famine Codes, one of which was published in the Blue-book in which it was the duty of the Government, and one which they recognised, to intervene. They recognised that food must be provided at relief works, that trade must be stimulated where it was sluggish by guaranteeing prices or advancing money to traders, and where there was a combination among traders not to sell at normal prices the Government might intervene, but save in those exceptional cases the Government of India were satisfied that the requirements of the situation could be met, as far as could be seen in the immediate future, by the action of private traders. The noble Lord was, no doubt, aware that the Local Governments in the different provinces had full power to act in those exceptional cases whenever they arose within their districts. The noble Lord had stated that the present famine was of exceptional severity, and that it had spread over a wider area than any previous famine. It was perfectly true, at any rate so far as the extent of the area was concerned; but he thought the noble Lord would agree that upon no former occasion had the Government of India been in so favourable a position owing to the wise foresight of those who laid down the Famine Codes for dealing with so widespread a calamity. He assured the noble Lord that, although a new condition of affairs had arisen inasmuch as the stocks of grain in India were likely to be drawn upon to the fullest possible extent, and it was possible that it might be necessary to import grain from outside, the Secretary of State and the Government of India were giving the most careful attention to the whole subject, and the remarks of the noble Lord would not be lost sight of. The Government of India would be the last persons to desire that their lordships should refrain from criticism of their action, but he expressed a hope that in this unexampled and double calamity which had fallen on India the Viceroy and his advisers might have the support of their lordships on both sides of the House. He was satisfied that if they were successful in combating this great evil they would establish a greater claim even than the remembrance of our military prowess or naval supremacy on the loyalty and affection of the people of India. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I am sure my noble Friend who introduced this subject was quite justified in doing so, because there can be no doubt of the magnitude of the calamity which affects our Indian Empire, and of the great difficulties with which the Government of India has to contend in meeting it. The question whether it is desirable or otherwise for the Government to interfere with trade for the purchase and storage of grain in affected parts of the country, is perhaps one of the most difficult administrative questions with which any Government can have to deal. Speaking generally, the more trade is left untrammelled the greater the probability of meeting the demand for grain or any other article in any country, and that general principle undoubtedly applies to India. The greater extent of railways, which now exists makes it far more easy for trade to meet the demand in different parts of India than was the case 23 years ago. At that time it was necessary to import considerable supplies of rice into the northern parts of Bengal. That was done by the Government of the day because, from the best information they could obtain, there was no probability whatever of trade dealing with the difficulty, and the result was satisfactory. It did not interfere with trade in other parts of the country, and the people were supplied with food. But what I wish to say on the present occasion is that I conceive this to be a matter which may be confidently and safely left to the discretion of the Government of India. ["Hear, hear!"] They have a great, an almost overwhelming, responsibility placed upon their shoulders. It seems to me, having read the Blue-book, that they have taken every precaution in their power to obtain the fullest information as to the food supplies, and that they are prepared to act with promptitude supposing it becomes necessary to take steps by the Government for the importation of food supplies into any part of the country. I happen to be personally acquainted with the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, of the North-West Provinces, and of the Punjab, three districts in which the greatest distress is anticipated, and I can assure your lordships that no three officers in the service of the Crown can be better able to cope with a difficulty of this or of any other description, and I have the most complete confidence that they will act with energy and promptitude. I desire also to express my opinion, as far as I am able to judge, that the full confidence of the people of this country may be placed in Lord Elgin and in those who are assisting him, and I do not think that any action of your Lordships is required by the circumstances of the case or is in any respect desirable. [*Cheers.*]

*LORD WENLOCK said that although he had lately returned from a part of India where, he was thankful to say, there was at present very slight distress, yet the noble Lord who introduced the subject had raised a question on which he thought he was able to throw a little light. In 1891-92, in the Presidency of Madras, they were threatened with a very serious state of affairs, arising from great scarcity of water, and naturally at that time the Government's attention was drawn most particularly to the question of the supply of grain to the impoverished districts. From all quarters the Government was constantly asked to take up the question itself and deal with it; but the conclusion it arrived at was that any interference with the food trade would be more likely to work harm than good. He often came across cases where "rings" or "corners" were made by the grain merchants, not only to keep up the price of grain, but to hold it back till prices reached a much higher figure, and on every occasion it was found that some private individual, or perhaps a syndicate of philanthropic and charitable persons, merely by sending up a truck or two of grain, was able at once to restore the balance of prices and to keep them steady throughout the whole country. That was by for the soundest course that could be adhered to. He was convinced the Governments of the various provinces were watching those points most narrowly, and if at any time it was found that private trade was not able to meet the requirements of the case, then and then only would the Government step in and do the work which the noble Lord wished them to do at once. He mentioned these facts because his experience was a recent one.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I cannot speak at all with the experience of my noble Friend Lord Northbrook, or that of the noble Lord who has been Governor of Madras, but I merely wish to echo the feeling which Lord Northbrook has expressed—that in this great calamity we must trust to the Government of India to take the necessary measures. [*Cheers.*] All those who have been connected with the administration of Indian affairs must be aware that there is no subject which has received more close and continuous attention than the dealing with famine, and never has the Government of India been so well prepared as it now is to cope with a calamity of this kind. Not only has a most elaborate code, founded upon experience of former famines, been drawn up, but, what is most material, in the course of the long period during which there has been no serious famine in India, there has been created a number of railways, generally known as famine lines, and by these means, to a great extent, the very serious difficulties which formerly existed in the way of carrying food to the people, because of there being no means of transport, have been overcome. I am sanguine that everything will be done that can possibly be done, although from the very magnitude of the calamity it will be impossible to prevent much privation and terrible suffering. I greatly lament that so great a calamity should be accompanied also with a threatened extension of the bubonic plague which has broken out in Bombay. If that plague should, unhappily, extend itself into the country, then indeed it will require all the energies which can possibly be displayed by the Government of India to cope with it. With regard to the statistics promised by the noble Lord, I do hope that in a crisis of this kind the not too numerous Civil Servants of the Government in India will not be vexed by being obliged to spend their time in making too elaborate returns.

["Hear, hear!"] Perhaps one of the greatest curses of the administration of India is the enormous amount of paper work now imposed upon the servants of the Government—["hear, hear!"]—and in a visitation of this kind, when every man will be employed to his utmost capacity and energy in connection with the relief works, I hope they may be allowed to pursue the more urgent work of looking after the distress and not be required to furnish too elaborate statistics of what is going on until after the calamity has been overcome. [*Cheers.*]

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: That has not been lost sight of by the Secretary of State. All that has been asked for is a rough calculation, and returns such as can be prepared from the local registers of deaths will suffice for the purpose, provided the information is prompt and is telegraphed.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I do not make the least complaint, but what I meant to deprecate was the pressure upon the Government which may come hereafter for more and more information. ["Hear, hear!"]

House adjourned at a Quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 1st February 1897.

STATIONERY OFFICE (PARLIAMENTARY PRINTING).

Copies presented, of Four Contracts entered into by Her Majesty's Stationery Office affecting Printing ordered by the Houses of Parliament, viz.: (1) with Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, dated the 12th January 1897; (2) with Wyman and Sons, Limited, dated the 13th of January 1897; (3) with Wyman and Sons, Limited, dated the 13th of January 1897; and (4) with Wyman and Sons, Limited, dated the 13th of January 1897 [by Command] to lie upon the Table.

IMPERIAL DEFENCE ACT 1888 (PORTS AND COALING STATIONS).

Account presented, prepared under Part II. of the Act, showing the money raised and issued out of the Consolidated Fund, the securities created in respect thereof, and the amount expended for the purposes of the Act to 31st March 1896, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon (by Act); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 42.]

QUESTIONS.

SHIPPING MASTERS AT ANTWERP.

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that serious allegations, involving charges of systematic fraud, have been publicly made against the four shipping masters attached to Her Majesty's Consulate General at Antwerp, for discharging and engaging British seamen at that port; that it is understood that an intimation was conveyed to these shipping masters that they must immediately take steps to clear themselves of these charges by taking legal proceedings against their accusers; that they have taken action in a closed court, where witnesses and necessary documents cannot be produced; and whether, under the circumstances, and in view of the fact that the accusers insist upon the truth of their charges, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will instruct Her Majesty's Consul General at Antwerp, or some other competent official, to demand or compel a full investigation into the truth, or otherwise, of the allegations?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): It is the case that serious allegations were preferred against the shipping masters referred to in the Question by members of another firm of shipping masters, Messrs. Tate, Burton and Company, in a series of letters addressed by the latter to the Consul General at Antwerp, and by printed circular distributed amongst the shipping community both there and in the United

Kingdom. Her Majesty's Consul General thereupon informed the shipping masters impugned that they must take measures to clear themselves of these allegations, and that, failing to do so, they would be excluded from the Consular Office. Upon the recommendation of their legal advisers, they accordingly brought an action against Messrs. Tate, Burton and Company in the Tribunal de Commerce, which is presided over by judges specially selected as being the highest experts in commercial and maritime matters. No witnesses can be heard in that court; but it is open to the public, and affidavits are admitted, every facility being given for bringing them forward, and the advocates on each side mutually supplying one another with copies of all documents which are to be produced in evidence. In the case under consideration the hearing was three times adjourned to give Messrs. Tate, Burton and Company the opportunity of bring their case before the Public Prosecutor, and of affording their advocate further time for preparation, and for procuring documentary evidence. In the meantime, while the case was still proceeding, Messrs. Tate, Burton and Company preferred two charges of extortion against the shipping masters before the Public Prosecutor. This functionary caused those charges to be investigated by the Chief of the Police, who pronounced them to be frivolous and untenable, and they were summarily rejected. I have this morning heard that the judgment of the Tribunal de Commerce has been given. Messrs.Tate, Burton and Company have been condemned to pay to the four British shipping masters, as damages for defamation of character, the sum of 1,600 francs, and they are further ordered to defray the costs of the trial, and to publish the judgment in the Antwerp newspapers. The complete falseness of the accusations having been conclusively established by this trial, and the character of the British shipping masters having been effectively cleared, there is no cause for further investigation.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS (WEST CAVAN).

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, (1) on what grounds the hours of posting at Arva were recently changed; and (2) did the Department order any inquiry into the general mail arrangements for the West Cavan postal districts with a view to insuring quicker delivery and later hours of posting in Arva, Belturbet, Ballyconnell, and Swanlinbar?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The earlier dispatch of the night mail from Arva by 30 minutes was recently rendered necessary in consequence of the train by which the supplementary night mail from Cavan is forwarded being started half an hour earlier. The department has no control over the working of that train. The dispatch from Arva is still, however, as late as 6.15 p.m. The second part of the hon. Member's Question presumably relates to a proposal put before the Department some time ago for using the Cavan Leitrim and Roscommon Railway for the conveyance of mails to and from Belturbet, Swanlinbar, &c. Inquiry showed, however, that the suggested service would afford on the whole inferior accommodation to that already provided, and the Department was therefore unable to entertain the proposal.

POOR LAW SCHOOLS.

MR. GEOFFREY DRAGE (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has come to any decision on the subject of the Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools which he can conveniently communicate to the House?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford), who was cheered, on his return to the House after illness, said: I am afraid it will be difficult to reply fully to the hon. Member within the ordinary limits of an answer to a question; but I will make as brief a statement as I can. I have carefully considered the recommendations in the Report of the Committee on Poor Law Schools and have come to the following decision. We propose to avail ourselves of the powers we possess under the Metropolitan Poor Act 1867, and to carry out the changes we contemplate by an Order of the Local Government Board instead of coming to Parliament. In doing this we give effect to some of the principal recommendations of the Committee. We propose to create a central body for the metropolis who will be responsible for the charge of certain classes of children. The classes of children for whom this authority will provide are:—(*a*) Those suffering from ophthalmia and other diseases of the eye; (*b*) those suffering from certain diseases of the skin or scalp; (*c*) those requiring either special treatment during convalescence or the benefit of seaside air; (*d*) those who by defective intellect or physical infirmity cannot be trained in association with children in ordinary schools; (*e*) children who are remanded to the workhouse by justices before being sent to industrial schools. For these classes of children I am satisfied that special provision must be made, and the arrangement proposed will have amongst others the following advantages:—The provision required can be made by an authority acting for the whole of London at less cost than would be entailed by each district making separate provision for this purpose; it will greatly benefit the children themselves; it will render unnecessary the detention in workhouses of classes of children whom it has been the practice to temporarily detain there; and, further, it will set free some of the accommodation in the existing schools, a result which is greatly to be desired. The members of the central body will be elected by the guardians of the several unions, but not necessarily from their own body. The Local Government Board will also have the power to nominate members. A draft Order has been prepared for this purpose, and dealing as it does with a matter of great importance to the metropolis, I have thought it right to communicate it to the various boards of guardians and the managers of the district schools for their information, and thus to afford them the opportunity of making suggestions to the Local Government Board if they desire it. Much objection has been made to the massing together in one institution of great numbers of children and we fully concur in this objection. In accordance with the practice of the Board for some years past we are declining to sanction proposals which would have the effect of extending the large schools in the metropolis, and we shall most readily entertain any proposals for applying to other purposes any of these large buildings, subject to other provision of a suitable character being made for the children. There are other recommendations of the Committee to which the Board are desirous of giving effect. We are in communication, through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the Canadian Government, with a view to arrangements for the more frequent visitation by officers of the Dominion of children sent out to Canada at the cost of the rates; and we have made special appointments of inspectors to inquire as to the prevalence of ophthalmia in the schools and also to the ventilation and warming of the rooms in these institutions as a preliminary step to determining the question of cubic space. Other matters, which can only be dealt with by legislation, are receiving the attention of the Board. I apologise to the House for the length of my reply, but it was impossible to make it shorter. [*Cheers.*]

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked whether the other children would be left as now with the guardians?

MR. CHAPLIN: We are not prepared to accept the main recommendation of the Committee, which was to hand over the charge of all children maintained out of the rates to a central body.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is provision to be made for the various classes of children in a large institution or in small and scattered institutions, and if in a larger institution will not that tend to increase the evil?

MR. CHAPLIN: I have already stated that it has been the practice of the Board to refuse their sanction to any further extension of these large institutions, and it will be their course in the future.

TROOPSHIPS (BALLASTING).

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War (1) whether it has been brought to his knowledge that the Union Steamship *Spartan*, which left Southampton on the 15th December last, carrying troops to the Cape, was insufficiently ballasted, and consequently rolled to a dangerous point, namely 40 degrees; and (2) whose duty it is to ascertain that vessels carrying troops are properly ballasted?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. E. Macartney, Antrim, S.): The answer to the first paragraph of the Question is in the negative. The *Spartan* left England with 1,650 tons of coal on board and 847 tons of cargo, besides 500 troops and their baggage. After passing Finisterre she encountered a severe gale and heavy sea, which caused her to roll considerably and induced the Master to lie to for 12 hours until the gale abated, a not unusual incident at this season of the year. The rolling was in no way due to insufficient ballasting, and the ship is reported to have sailed in exceptionally good trim, having in addition to the cargo and coal, 731 tons of water and permanent ballast. As regards the second paragraph, the Admiralty assume the same responsibility in respect of the ballasting of Troop Transports and Troop Freight Ships as devolves on the Board of Trade in the case of Emigrant Ships.

WRECK (INDIAN TROOPSHIP "WARREN HASTINGS.")

Mr. VICARY GIBBS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what was the cause of the disaster to the *Warren Hastings*, on or about the 13th January, when carrying troops to the Mauritius; and whether compensation will be paid to the regiment, or to individual members of it, for loss of property?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): It is not yet known what was the cause of the wreck of the *Warren Hastings*. A full Inquiry will no doubt take place. The allowance regulations provide for compensation within certain limits to all officers and men losing property under such circumstances, and any claims submitted to the War Office will be duly considered.

SLIGO POST OFFICE.

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General has yet decided on a site for the proposed new post office in Sligo; how long have the Post Office authorities been inquiring and inspecting in regard to a site for said office; and will provision been made in the Estimates for the building of the proposed new post office premises in Sligo?

Mr. HANBURY: The Postmaster General regrets that he has not yet been able to obtain a site for a new post office at Sligo. In response to advertisements issued nearly two years ago, several offers have been received and considered, but none of them have proved to be in all respects suitable. None is to be obtained in the centre of the town at a cost which the Department would be justified in entertaining; and one in Wine Street, which could be obtained at a moderate price, is objected to by the Municipal Council as not being sufficiently central. Under these circumstances it would not be in accordance with the usual practice to make any specific provision for the building in the Estimates for 1897-98.

PURCHASE OF HOLDINGS (IRELAND).

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that agreements for the purchase of their holdings were entered into by the tenants of Miss French, of Riversdale, county of Roscommon, so far back as the year 1892, and have not yet been carried out; and, if so, what is the cause of the delay?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): The Land Commissioners are unable to trace the matter referred to in the Question, as it does not appear that any purchase agreements have been lodged in a case where Miss French is owner.

LANARKSHIRE MILITIA.

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if it is under consideration or arranged that 1,500 or 1,800 men of the Lanarkshire Militia are to be taken to Aldershot for a course of three to four weeks' training there instead of at Lanark as at present, a course involving an additional expenditure of probably £3,000; and if he will reconsider the proposal, seeing that it would involve a great loss to the town?

*Mr. BRODRICK: Two of the Lanarkshire Militia battalions will be trained this year at Aldershot, as they form part of a Militia Brigade which, for military reasons, it is proposed to train together. I may, perhaps, remind the hon. Member that, with every desire to consult local interests, the military efficiency of a corps must be the paramount consideration in deciding where its training shall take place.

Mr. J. WILSON (Falkirk): May I ask if the hon. Gentleman will exchange an English for a Scottish Regiment, in order that they may get the benefit of the fresh air of Lanark moor? [*Laughter.*]

*Mr. BRODRICK: It is not a question of giving the militiamen fresh air, but of military efficiency. ["Hear, hear."]

COLOUR-BLIND TESTS (SAILORS).

Mr. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, of the number of persons (sailors) rejected by the Board of Trade as colour blind, as appears from the Board's Report, 1896, 38 per cent. of those that were rejected and appealed were, on appeal, passed; and whether the Board of Trade propose to take any steps to revise their tests?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): 6,680 candidates were examined during the 16 months ended December 31st, 1895, in colour vision. 101 failed, but of these 21 availed themselves of the right to appeal, and eight passed on appeal. The present system of sight tests is based upon the report of the Committee of the Royal Society specially appointed to inquire into the subject, and I am advised that no case has been made out for revising it.

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he would allow all boys of five years' apprenticeship to be examined, so that, after having learned the trade of a seaman, they might not at the end of their term possibly be put aside.

Mr. RITCHIE said that anyone who desired to present himself for examination could do so, and he would be examined. The only difference was that the examination was not compulsory in the case mentioned by his hon. Friend.

Mr. WOLFF asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would make the examination compulsory in the case of boys.

Mr. RITCHIE replied in the negative, observing that in the case of boys it would not be sufficient, for large numbers of men became officers who did not enter the service in the manner suggested.

CAB LICENCES (METROPOLIS).

Mr. T. G. FARDELL (Paddington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can inform the House at whose instance a considerable quantity of number plates have been removed from cabs since the commencement of the cab strike and before the expiration of the year for which the licences of the cabs in question were granted; and, whether such removal is permissible under the orders made by him under The Metropolitan Public Carriage Act, 1869, which came into force on 1st September 1896; and, if so, under which of those orders?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Mathew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): Number plates are removed before the expiration of the year if proprietors wishing to surrender their licences desire it. There is nothing in the Acts or the Order to prevent this being done.

MOUNTJOY PRISON (HEALTH OF PRISONER).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) will he explain why a letter written by Martin Malony, at present confined in Maryborough Prison, to his parents from Mountjoy Prison on the 8th of December last, in which he describes the dangerous state of his health, was suppressed by the prison authorities; (2) whether Malony had been for many months in hospital in Mountjoy Prison before his removal to Maryborough, also why the Maryborough Prison authorities refused Malony permission to describe the state of his health in a letter to his parents written on the 8th instant; (3) what is the present condition of Malony's health; and (4) on what grounds or by what prison rule was a good conduct prisoner refused permission to make known to his parents the dangerous condition of his health?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The letter referred to in the first paragraph was not forwarded because it contained a passage which was directly at variance with the fact regarding the condition of Malony's health. The prisoner was told he could write another letter instead, and he did so. He was in hospital in Mountjoy Prison for about four months before his removal to Maryborough, and the authorities of the latter prison gave him permission to describe the true state of his health in the letter written by him on the 8th January. The condition of the prisoner is in no way dangerous. He is suffering from dyspepsia, but not of an aggravated type. He has no organic disease, and his appetite is good. The rule under which action was taken in reference to the letters of this prisoner, prescribes that every letter to or from a prisoner shall be read by the Governor and Chaplain, and if the contents be objectionable it shall not be forwarded, or the objectionable part shall be erased according to discretion.

DOG LICENCES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware of the general dissatisfaction felt amongst petty sessions clerks in Ireland with the form Schedule B, Registry of Dogs Licence, which requires the signature of the petty sessions clerk to be appended in four places; and, whether he will have provided a more simple form of licence, such as is in use in England?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The body of the licence referred to is in conformity with the form prescribed by the Dogs Regulation Act of 1865, and although I am not aware that general dissatisfaction is felt by petty sessions clerks as alleged in the Question, it appears to me that the form of licence is somewhat complicated. If a suitable opportunity should present itself hereafter to simplify the body of the form by legislation, I will be prepared to substitute a form for that now in use. I may add that the signature of the Clerk is really required in two places only on the existing form, and that the note on the form requiring the cancellation of the stamps by signature will be modified.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord lieutenant of Ireland, whether he intends during the present Session, to institute an inquiry in regard to technical education in Ireland and, if so, can he inform the House as to the manner in which the inquiry will be conducted?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A Commission has been appointed by the Irish Government with a view to determine how far and in what form manual and practical instruction should be included in the educational system of the primary schools under the Board of National Education in Ireland. As regards the question of technical education in Ireland generally, I do not, as at present advised, propose to institute a public inquiry on the subject.

INCORPORATION (METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS).

MR. T. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he is willing to confer charters of incorporation on districts of the metropolis, under the Municipal Corporation Acts; and, if so, whether he will deal with any particular locality that may apply to him, or with all the districts of London at once; and, whether the existing form of municipal government of the metropolis can be altered otherwise than by Act of Parliament?

MR. CHAPLIN: The hon. Member asks me whether I am willing to confer charters of incorporation on districts of the metropolis. The answer is very simple. I have no power to do so. Applications for charters are made to the Privy Council.

MR. LOUGH asked if the right hon. Gentleman would say what advice he would give to the Privy Council in the case of such applications.

MR. CHAPLIN: My advice has never been asked.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY OF IRELAND.

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade can anything be done to induce the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland to erect a bridge over the level crossing at the town of Clones; and is he aware that this crossing is a cause of grave inconvenience to farmers, who bring their cattle and agricultural produce to the fairs and markets of Clones for disposal, as well as to the general public; also that the closing of railway gates, owing to shunting operations, on Sundays and holidays, often delays Catholics on the way to worship, the only passage, when the gates are shut, being a narrow tunnel too abominably filthy to admit of description?

MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade have further communicated with the Great Northern Railway of Ireland on the subject of this Question, and I shall be happy to show the hon. Member the reply I have received. While it gives no hope that a bridge will be constructed and combats the allegation of inconvenience, a promise is made that the charge with reference to the subway shall be further looked into.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the expediency of bringing in a Bill to abolish the Great Northern Railway in the interests of the Roman Catholics of Ireland?

[No answer was given].

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, will an inquiry be ordered into the allegation that a special train was run on a single line from Newbliss to Clones on 27th August without safety staff; and what steps will be taken to prevent the repetition of a neglect so dangerous to travellers?

MR. RITCHIE: I find that it is true that a special train was allowed to leave Newbliss for Clones on the day referred to without the train staff. The staff had been removed from the magazine, but by inadvertence the train left without it. It is not a case for an inquiry, but a letter shall be addressed to the Company expressing a hope that the necessity for great care in such matters will be enforced on their servants.

POLLEN FISHERY (LOUGH NEAGH).

MR. P. C. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether it is a fact that, owing to the present state of the Law affecting the fishing for pollen in Lough Neagh, great quantities of fish fit for food are not legally saleable and consequently allowed to rot, affecting the industry of about 300 families of poor fishermen; and whether he can see his way to introduce a short Bill making it lawful to sell pollen of a length of seven inches and upwards?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Under the existing law (54 & 55 Vic., cap. 20) it is illegal to capture pollen of less size than eight inches. Experiments have been made with the view of ascertaining the condition of pollen less than that length, and apart altogether from the consideration, whether a fish of less than eight inches in length would be useful as a marketable commodity, the results of the experiments appear to clearly show that to reduce the size limit, would be injurious to the pollen fisheries.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, S.) asked whether it was not the fact that with the present legal net, great quantities of pollen were caught between seven and eight inches, and whether as a result of the law as it stood these fish, though caught, were not allowed to be sold, and were consequently rendered useless and allowed to rot?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I can give the hon. Member this further information, which I think will practically answer the questions he has put to me. It appears that a number of undersized pollen are taken. This seems to be unavoidable, because the present size of the meshes of the net used is calculated to retain pollen of eight inches, when the net is in its normal condition. But when the net is being drawn with a string on the meshes these close up to a certain extent, and this would also be the case if even the mesh were larger than at present. A certain waste, therefore, does take place, some being eaten by the fishermen and others given to the pigs.

MR. DILLON asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not think it would be fair to allow the fishermen to sell all the fish that was caught by the present legal net.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR was understood to say that he did not think so.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (IRISH COAST).

MR. JAMES GILHOOLY (Cork, Co. W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that owing to stress of weather a number of fishermen residing on the shores of Bantry Bay were unable to haul their trammel nets, and that English trawlers when trawling on Sunday destroyed and carried away a number of those nets; and, whether a prosecution will be instituted against the trawlers referred to?

MR. MACARTNEY: No information as to the circumstances in question has been received. Last October, in consequence of numerous complaints of illegal trawling and damage done to nets in Bantry Bay, H.M.S. *Leda* was ordered to the locality and remained there from November 18th to the 11th ultimo, but the commanding officer found it impossible to substantiate the complaints made to him on one or two occasions. The question of prosecution in such cases is not one for the Admiralty to deal with.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that English steam trawlers are in the habit of constantly visiting the fishing grounds off Ballycotton, county Cork, and are seriously injuring these grounds by incessant and indiscriminate trawling; and, whether, in view of the fact that this practice interferes with the livelihood of a very poor class of hard working men, steps will be taken to prevent the destruction of an important Irish industry?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A public Inquiry was recently held at Ballycotton by the Inspectors of Fisheries relative to steam trawling in the bay, and as a result of the Inquiry a bye-law has been prepared with a view to protect the local fishermen from the operations of the steam trawlers.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask whether the bye-laws permit steam trawlers working on Sunday?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that without notice.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): Is there not great difficulty in overtaking these steam trawlers?

[No answer was given.]

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is now able to lay the Report of Lord Tweedmouth's Commission upon the Table of the House, and to afford facilities for its being printed?

MR. HANBURY: I answered a similar Question of the Hon. Member on the 21st January. The Report is now under the consideration of the Treasury and Postmaster General. As soon as a decision has been arrived on the several questions raised in the Report, it will be laid before the House.

PATENTED INVENTIONS.

MR. W. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Great Britain is the only country which grants letters patent for inventions without any stipulation that the articles so patented must be manufactured within the country?

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir. The Patent Laws of the United States, of India, and of the princidal British Colonies do not stipulate that the articles must be manufactured within the country.

PAYMENT OF COMMON JURORS.

MR. J. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the question of introducing a Bill during the course of the Session to provide for the payment of the expenses of common jurors while attending assizes and quarter sessions; and to give them reasonable remuneration for loss of time necessarily incurred?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am afraid I cannot promise that the Government will be able to deal with this question during the present Session. I think, however, that, at any rate so far as out-of-pocket expenses are concerned, some such proposal is worthy of consideration. As the expenditure involved would have to be met out of local funds, I suggested to a deputation which saw me last year, and of which the hon. Member was one, that steps might be taken to ascertain the feeling of the local authorities on the subject. Up to the present time, however, I have had very few representations on the subject.

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Wexford (Mr. Thomas Healy), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if sailors and tradesmen, employed by the Irish Lights Board are held entitled to retiring allowances in old age; and, if so, why are the workmen who act as gasmakers to the Irish lighthouses not similarly treated?

Mr. RITCHIE: Seamen, and certain foremen tradesmen in the service of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, are entitled to pensions. Gasmakers are qualified for gratuities on retirement after fifteen years' service, but not for pensions, as they are not on the permanent staff.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he intends to bring in a Bill for the more efficient management of the Irish Lights Board?

Mr. RITCHIE: No, Sir.

WARDEN ESTATE, COUNTY KERRY.

Mr. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been directed to the condition of things which exists on the Warden Estate at Sneem, in the county Kerry; (2) whether he is aware that on that estate, old arrears of rent, outstanding for many years, have been used to deprive a great number of tenants of all rights under the Land Acts; and, whether, under the law as it now stands, the tenants have any remedy; and, (3) if not, whether he can undertake to introduce during the present Session, a Measure dealing with the subject of arrears of rent in Ireland?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: My attention has been drawn to the condition of things on the estate mentioned in the first paragraph. I have been informed, though I cannot say how far accurately, that the purchaser of this property has also purchased all arrears, as he was entitled to do; that he is taking the arrears from the tenants in instalments on easy terms; and that he is affording employment to a number of the tenants and their sons, at an expenditure of about £27 weekly. I am also informed that the purchaser has, in some instances, obtained mortgages from the tenants of their interest in their holdings to secure the arrears. This, if true and *bonâ-fide*, would prevent them from applying to have a fair rent fixed while this mortgage by assignment exists, except with the consent of the mortgagee. The tenants whose tenancies were determined before the passing of the Act of last year are unaffected by its provisions, and, therefore, they could not have redeemed except upon payment of all the rent and arrears due by them, the purchaser having purchased the old arrears, and having thus been placed in the same position as the former landlord. It was open to the tenants on the occasion of the ejectments having been brought against them for non-payment, to have appealed under the 6th section of the Land Act of 1887 to have a fair rent fixed, if it had not been fixed already, or to have the arrears made payable in instalments under the 30th section of that Act. This they apparently omitted to do. The case does not seem to call for special legislation.

Mr. DILLON asked if the right hon. Gentleman had made any inquiry as to the date from which these old arrears had accrued due and how long they had been hanging over the tenants? He would also remind the right hon. Gentleman that he had not answered the last paragraph of the Question—whether the Government, in view of this position of affairs, would introduce a Measure dealing with this question of arrears?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes; I did answer that Question. I said it was a matter which did not appear to me to require any special legislation.

TELEGRAPH CABLE (WEST INDIES).

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give an approximate date on which it is likely that the sanction of Her Majesty's Government will be given to the construction of a cable giving telegraphic communication with the West Indies which shall be under British control; is he aware that a cable of three words from Antigua to Great Britain costs at the present reduced rates 19s.; and, is he aware that, whilst the Colonial Office are considering the question, the French and American lines are being pushed forward, and that when completed they will tap the principal sources of revenue, which would otherwise be secured to British enterprise?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I cannot state the date at which an agreement for the construction of the cable referred to will be completed. Negotiations on the subject are in progress. A cable telegram of three words to Antigua costs 22s. 3d. A French cable has recently been laid by a French company in conjunction, as I understand, with an American company, which will compete for the West Indian traffic with the proposed British cable. I imagine this cable would have been laid in any case.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that both the Canadian Government and one or more of the West India minor Governments were so anxious that this cable should be constructed, that they had already voted or arranged for, subsidies to be granted for the purpose?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I think if the hon. and gallant Gentleman requires precise and definite information he should put his Question on the Paper.

SAMPLE POST (BUTTERFLIES).

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he can explain the action of the Post Office authorities under any existing rule in refusing to deliver by sample post samples of species of butterflies sent from residents abroad to an eminent entomologist and dealer in natural history specimens residing in Eastbourne, with a view to a guidance of future commercial relations with persons abroad; whether he can state under what rule the Post Office acts in demanding from the gentleman in question, an increased postage or the return to place of origin of the aforesaid packets, thereby seriously damaging the business of the said entomologist; and whether cut flowers are allowed to pass through the post as samples under Rule 7?

MR. HANBURY: In the matter to which the hon. Member's first Question refers the Post Office is only carrying out, as it is bound to do, a deliberate decision of the Postal Union, that natural history specimens are not entitled to be sent by the sample post, which is intended for *bonâ fide* samples of merchandise, of no saleable value, and for nothing else. In strictness, packets improperly sent by parcel post should be stopped and returned to the senders; but in the present instance, at the naturalist's own request, the concession was made that packets of butterflies addressed to him should be transferred to the post by which they might have been sent, if he would undertake in all such cases to pay the charges incurred. He ultimately declined to take advantage of the concession, and the strict rule is therefore being acted on. As regards cut flowers, I presume that the hon. Member is referring to rule 7 of the Foreign Sample Post Regulations in the Post Office Guide, which embodies the Postal Union Regulations excluding from the sample post articles of saleable value. If cut flowers have no such value and are sent by a dealer as a *bonâ fide* trade sample they are entitled to pass by sample post. I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given to a similar question put by the hon. Member for Canterbury on the 5th of June last. There has been no ruling of the Postal Union on the transmission of cut flowers as there has been on that of natural history specimens.

PAROCHIAL BOARD OF SANQUHAIR.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Reddy, whom the Parochial Board of

Sanquhair, Dumfries-shire, propose to remove to the Union of Cavan without incurring the cost of the usual order for so doing; and, whether this action has been sanctioned by the Scotch Office?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed by the Local Government Board for Scotland that the Parish Council do not propose to remove Patrick Reddy to Ireland without the usual order.

MAIL CONTRACT SUBSIDIES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the importance of securing the most rapid and perfect transmission of the mails, and in view of the complaints made as to the restriction of competition, he will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the whole subject of the contracts for conveyance of mails by sea and the payment of subsidies to British steamship companies?

MR. HANBURY: The Government do not at present see sufficient reasons for the appointment of such a Committee, but my hon. Friend will no doubt find an opportunity of bringing forward in the House the facts and arguments upon which he bases his suggestion, and if they should appear to be sufficient, the Government will be prepared to consider the appointment of a Committee.

MERCANTILE MARINE (CLASSIFICATION).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will be able to place before the House a Return showing the classification of persons employed in the Mercantile Marine, similar to the tables compiled by the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen in 1893?

MR. RITCHIE: The preparation of the Return to which the right Hon. Baronet refers is being expedited as much as possible, but, having regard to the fact that many of the particulars necessary for its compilation will not reach the Registrar General until next month, I fear the Return cannot be placed on the Table before July.

DOG MUZZLING (METROPOLIS).

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture how many cases of canine hydrophobia have been reported in the Metropolitan district during the last six months; and whether there is any chance of the muzzling order being repealed or relaxed?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): Twelve cases of rabies have been reported in the County of London and 22 in the five home counties during the last six months. I am informed that the Public Control Committee of the London County Council propose that the present muzzling regulations should now be so far relaxed as to give exemption to dogs under proper control, and wearing a collar bearing the name and address of the owner. In this connection, I may perhaps be allowed to point out, however, that it will be necessary for the whole subject to be further considered in the light of the report of the committee which has been sitting for some time past to inquire into the working of the laws relating to dogs. I understand that the committee propose that a determined effort should now be made to rid the country of rabies once and for all. If this could be accomplished, the necessity for the issue of intermittent muzzling regulations by particular local authorities would disappear. I am under the impression that the owners of dogs and the public generally would support a well-considered scheme which promised to secure the complete extirpation of rabies in these islands—a result which is never likely to be secured under the existing system.

SIERRA LEONE RAILWAY.

MR. CHARLES BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what progress has been made during the past year with the Sierra Leone Railway; and what time is likely to elapse before any portion of the line is open for traffic?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: This work was commenced at the end of 1895. Since then the terminal depôt at Freetown, with landing pier, workshops, and quarters, has been completed, 21 miles of the line have been surveyed, the earthworks and bridges for a length of $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles have been finished, and the permanent way laid for three miles. The unfavourable climatic conditions make it difficult to form estimates of progress, but it is expected that a considerable section of the railway will be open for traffic in June, 1898.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (BUCHANNAN *v.* COWELL).

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the reasons why the Court of the Irish Land Commission upon Tuesday last refused the application of the tenant under the Redemption of Rent Act, in the case of Buchannan *v.* Cowell; and whether he will procure the shorthand writer's report of the judgment of Mr. Justice Bewley, and lay it upon the Table of the House?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that the reasons for the decision of the Court of the Land Commission in the case referred to appear to have been fully stated by Mr. Justice Bewley when delivering the judgment of the Court. To lay the judgment on the Table of the House would be without precedent, and I see no sufficient reason for taking the step.

PRISON SERVICE (IRELAND).

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of officials of the Presbyterian religion in the Irish Prison service holding the positions of governor, deputy governor, or chief warder, respectively, exclusive of bridewell keepers in old reduced county prisons; and whether it is the fact, as stated in *The Belfast Northern Whig*, of the 16th and 22nd inst., that the Irish Prisons Board have declined to appoint Presbyterians to such positions in the ordinary prisons; and, if so, has such a course the sanction of the Irish Government?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that there are no governors or deputy governors in the Irish Prison service professing the Presbyterian religion, but that one chief warder and some 28 male subordinate officers in the service belong to that denomination. There is absolutely no foundation for the allegation in the second paragraph of the question.

LABOUR DEPARTMENT (LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS).

MR. HARRY H. MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will grant a Return, giving the names of the local correspondents of the Labour Department, the remuneration paid to each of them, and the names of the persons on whose recommendation they were appointed?

MR. RITCHIE: If the hon. Member will move for a return similar to that presented in June, 1893, of which I have handed him a copy, I will agree to it.

COMPANIES LIMITED LIABILITY ACTS.

MR. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will cause to be published and circulated the proceedings, which are in print, of the Departmental Committee which sat last year to inquire into the state of the Companies Limited Liability Acts as they are at present enforced?

MR. RITCHIE: I presume the hon. Member refers to the Departmental Committee which sat in 1895. The appendix to the report contains all the evidence taken by the Committee. It is not proposed to lay on the table the Minutes of Proceedings, as this is not usual in the case of Departmental Committees. Moreover, the discussions of the Committee were to a large extent of an informal character.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND).

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he intends during this Session to introduce a Bill for the local government of Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; it is not the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill for the purpose stated during the present Session.

VACCINATION OFFICERS' FEES.

Mr. L. R. **HOLLAND** (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the fact that vaccination officers are paid only by fees upon successful cases of vaccination, and that therefore their incomes have been largely reduced in a great number of districts by the non-enforcement of the Vaccination Acts by boards of guardians while their actual work is in no degree diminished thereby, the Local Government Board will sanction boards of guardians paying the vaccination officers by fees based upon birth returns as well as upon successful cases of vaccination?

Mr. **CHAPLIN**: Experience has amply shown the importance of payment of vaccination officers by results as a principle of general application, but I will consider whether any modification in the existing rule can be made under which the payment to the vaccination officers shall not wholly depend on fees in respect of the certificates of successful vaccination registered.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

Mr. W. F. B. **MASSEY-MAINWARING** (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if this year the funds will be provided necessary to complete the frontage of the South Kensington Museum; and, if so, will it be a condition that the extra space shall be available for the exhibition of objects of art, and not for any increase to the present number of offices.

Mr. **MASSEY-MAINWARING** also asked the Secretary to the Treasury if the necessary funds will be provided so that the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Natural History Museum may be lighted with an electric installation?

Mr. **HANBURY**: These questions should more properly be addressed to my right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works, but if the hon. Member will refer to Class I. of the Estimates for 1897-98, issued last week, he will see for himself that it is not proposed to ask Parliament to provide funds for the purposes mentioned during the coming year.

KHAMA'S TERRITORY (LIQUOR LICENCES).

Sir **MARK STEWART** (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has seen a copy of a letter addressed by Khama to the Native races and the Liquor Traffic United Committee protesting against refreshment rooms in which intoxicating liquors will be sold being opened on that portion of the railway which will pass through his territory; whether in the event of refreshment rooms being opened on the railway passing through Khama's territory, licences would be granted for the sale of intoxicating liquors; and whether the granting of such licences is in contravention of the pledges given to Khama by Her Majesty's Government on the occasion of his visit to England in 1895?

Mr. J. **CHAMBERLAIN**: I have seen the letter referred to. The question of granting licences for refreshment rooms on the railway, within Khama's territory has not yet been mooted and, when it is, I will consider it in the light of all the circumstances of the case including of course the promises made to Khama.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE (VISIT OF COLONIAL PREMIERS).

*Mr. J. F. **HOGAN** (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the event of a majority of the Premiers of the self-governing colonies finding themselves in a position to accept his invitation to participate in the celebration of the 60th year of Her Majesty's reign, advantage will be taken of their presence in England to hold an Imperial Conference with a view to the discussion and determination of contemporary questions of common colonial concern, and the completion of the work entered upon by the Colonial Conferences of London in 1887 and Ottawa in 1894?

Mr. J. **CHAMBERLAIN**: The matter referred to in the Question of the hon. Member will be taken into consideration.

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War how many civilian medical practitioners have been employed during the past year to give professional aid to the troops in Great Britain and Ireland owing to vacancies in the Army Medical Staff; and what were the actual number of vacancies in the Army Medical Service up to 31st December 1896?

*MR. BRODRICK: The number of civil practitioners specially employed during the past year was 77. It is not possible to associate the engagement of individual practitioners with particular vacancies in the Medical Staff, but there were on the 31st of December last 39 vacancies, and, although 13 surgeons were on probation at Netley, the number of private practitioners engaged was somewhat larger than would otherwise have been the case. There may, therefore, be some connection between the number of private practitioners engaged and the number of vacancies.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (IRELAND.)

MR. P. M'HUGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can inform the House whether a Measure for the establishment and endowment of a Catholic University in Ireland will be introduced by the Government this Session: and has he taken steps to ascertain the views of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of Ireland, and of theParliamentary representatives of Ireland, as to the establishment of an Irish Roman Catholic University; and if not, will he be good enough to inform the House what practical steps, if any, he proposes to take during the present Session to meet the claims of Irish Catholics in regard to University education?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not think it is desirable for me in the shape of an answer to a question to add anything to what I said the other night rather fully in debate upon this subject.

SHIPPING AND MARITIME PROPERTY (COMPENSATION FOR INJURY).

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is a in position to state what course Her Majesty's Government propose to take in order to remedy defects in the law, so as to afford shipping and maritime property the same protection as is accorded to property on land in respect of compensation for injury and damage done under circumstances of riot and civil disturbance?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: In answer to the Question of my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to say that we find great difficulty in merely extending the existing law which operates on land to cases contemplated in his Question, but I am in communication with the Attorney General to find a way out of the difficulty.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Military Lands Act, 1892, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brodrick and Mr. Powell-Williams; presented and read the First time, to be read a Second time on Thursday; and to be printed.—[Bill 103.]

BERRIEW SCHOOL.

Bill to annul an Order in Council confirming a scheme relating to the Foundation known as the Berriew School, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Gorst and Mr. Hanbury; presented, and read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Thursday; and to be printed.—[Bill 104.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.).

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) moved "That it is expedient—

(a) to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an aid grant to Voluntary Schools, not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools;

(*b*) to repeal as regards day schools so much of section nineteen of The Elementary Education Act, 1876, as imposes a limit on the Parliamentary grant to elementary schools in England and Wales; and

(*c*) to make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools."

The right hon. Gentleman, who was received with cheers, said:—Mr. Lowther, among the manifold blessings showered upon us by the Opposition during the course of the Debates upon last year's Education Bill was a plentiful stock of good advice. The Members on the Front Bench opposite and Gentlemen sitting in various other parts of the House—["hear, hear!"]—told the Government that if they had confined their Measure to what was mentioned in the Queen's Speech last year, namely, the relief of Voluntary Schools—if they had checked their vaulting ambition, if they had consented to bring in a brief and simple Bill, that Bill might have received some small amount of criticism and opposition, but would have found something like general acceptance in its main principles from both sides of the House. I do not think I misrepresent the views laid before us, especially by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife, when I say he was peculiarly insistent on the wisdom of the policy of bringing in a short Bill rather than a comprehensive Bill. When the Opposition give you advice in regard to the length of time a particular discussion will take, one has to regard that more or less as the advice of experts—[*laughter*]—and when they prophecy that any particular Measure will last a very long time they have the satisfaction, which few prophets have, of being in the position of seeing their own prophecy adequately fulfilled. [*Laughter.*] Under these circumstances, as early as last July—indeed, I think earlier—in the Debate in which I announced that the Bill of last year was dropped, certainly if not then in a public speech which I made shortly afterwards, I announced to all to whom it was of interest that when the Government brought in the Measure they were resolved to bring in for some relief to Voluntary Schools out of Imperial resources, that Bill should be so carefully restricted in its scope that there should be no danger of its defeat merely through lapse of time or through the multiplication of the subjects of debate which Gentlemen opposite are so ingenious in discovering. [*Cheers.*] That pledge the Government had adhered to. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill we bring in to-day is a Bill not in any sense covering, or attempting to cover, the field of educational reform. Last year we brought in a Measure designed not merely to give some relief to Voluntary Schools, but also to give relief to necessitous Board Schools, to decentralise the work of the Education Department, to deal with the special questions of secondary education, and to set up such an educational machinery in the country as would unify the system of primary education with the system which exists or ought to be set up with regard to secondary education. That was a comprehensive scheme; I think it was a good scheme. [*Cheers.*] But it is manifest, if it is to be accomplished—and I think it is—it must be accomplished piecemeal, and not in the shape of one Bill embracing these large and critical subjects, and lending itself, by the very fact that it does embrace them, as a helpless mark to the arrows of obstruction. We have taken, therefore, what is a fragment of a great subject, but it is a fragment very clearly defined in its scope and very urgent in its character. I admit the temptation to add to the question of the relief of Voluntary Schools the question of the relief of necessitous Board Schools was a most tempting one—tempting, at all events, to Gentlemen on this side of the House. That was part of the scheme of last year. It is undoubtedly an object which ought at an early date to be dealt with, in our judgment, by the Imperial Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] But the problems which it raises are different in many vital particulars from the problem raised by the relief of the necessitous Voluntary Schools. The scheme which applies to the one does not apply to the other, and we feel we were right in adhering to the policy announced last year—namely, that we would not weight our Bill, in so far as it dealt with Voluntary Schools, by extraneous matter, however important and however urgent that extraneous matter might be. ["Hear, hear!"] Those are reasons which will, I trust, satisfy my hon. Friends on this side of the House. They will see that if, as is possible, though I fear it is hardly probable, the Bill we are introducing slips rapidly through all its stages, in that case there will be no difficulty in bringing forward the further Measure to which I have referred. [*Laughter and cheers.*] But if, on the other hand, so far from finding in a Bill restricted to the relief of Voluntary Schools a simple Measure on which all sides may be agreed, hon. Gentlemen find in such a Bill an endless theme for discussion and Debate, then there is not a man on this side, I venture to say, who will not thank the Government for the foresight they have shown in this matter and will not be obliged to them for not having imperilled one great subject by allying it with another great subject. [*Cheers.*] So much for the feeling of Gentlemen on this side of the House, and I hope the reasons I have just ventured to give them will satisfy them. But no reason can surely be required to satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite that the course we have taken is the right one. I admit I have seen in the public Press a great many statements and speeches made by persons in authority to the effect that hon. Gentlemen opposite were anxiously desirous that in this Bill should be included provisions for aiding ratepayers in the districts of necessitous Board Schools. I have never been able to attach any credence to those statements. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said so in the Address—I hear him whisper. I am always ready to accept his statements, but even that statement slipped from him, it seemed to me, in a moment of incaution. [*Laughter.*] But, after all, what are we to do? We are asked by the right hon. Gentleman and by those who wish to include provision for necessitous Board Schools, to relieve the most hard-pressed and the most deserving class of ratepayers. On this side of the House we have always been in favour of relieving the hard-pressed ratepayers. [*Cheers.*] It is quite new to me that that is the favourite doctrine of the other side. ["Hear, hear!"] Why, Sir, not only did the right hon. Gentleman the late Minister for Education do nothing in this direction when he was in office, but how did we occupy a large part of last Session? We occupied it in listening to denunciations from the other side of our efforts to relieve ratepayers. [*Cheers and Opposition cries of* "Landlords!"] Wait a moment, I am coming to that. There was especially one eventful week in which we were discussing in Committee the Bill of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, whom we are all so glad to see back amongst us—[*cheers*]—in which it is safe to say there was not one hour of the day or night in which you had not a good prospect, if you came within the walls of this House, of hearing the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition explaining at great length—[*laughter*]—that all the attempted relief of ratepayers went into the pockets of the landlord. No reiteration appeared to dull the pleasure which he gave us, custom never staled him, he went on with a splendid and persevering uniformity, and so enamoured was he of the topic that when the opportunity was unfortunately taken from him in this House by the conclusion of our Debates on the Bill, the whole staple of his speeches in the country through the autumn consisted in dwelling again upon that well-worn theme. [*Laughter and cheers.*] And are we to be now told that, as we were kept up night after night in 1896 to prevent relief from going into the pockets of the landlords, we are to be kept up night after night in 1897 in order to prevent relief from going to the ratepayers? [*Cheers.*] Are we seriously to be told that the laws of political economy which we were said then to have disregarded are to be miraculously suspended in the particular case of elementary education? I will not dwell longer upon this aspect of the question. I have stated, I hope not in immoderate language, the difficulty I find in believing that hon. Gentlemen are going to take the course which is threatened. I wait their reply on the particular aspect of the question. I may say I look forward with the greatest confidence to the opportunity which I shall have of dealing with the subject on future occasions. I have now explained to the House what we do not propose to do in this Bill, and why we do not propose to do it. I pass now to a very brief survey of the provisions which the Measure will actually contain, and I am glad to think in this matter I have, or I hope I have, no surprises to spring on the House. The statements which have been made by

Members of the Government in the country, and, indeed, in this House, have led the majority of those interested in forecasting the legislative future to foresee that we should limit our efforts in this Bill to the three questions of relieving Voluntary Schools from the pressure of the rates, of dealing with the 17s. 6d. limit, and of distributing the aid grant. On the first of these topics—that of the relief of schools from the pressure of the rates—I think it will be universally admitted by those who have given any study to the question that the present position of Voluntary Schools in relation to the rating authority is one of great inequality, and not only inequality but uncertainty, and in our opinion the inequality and uncertainty should both at once be put an end to. [*Cheers.*] In the majority of cases throughout England and Wales, I believe that practically no rates are levied on Voluntary Schools. In London and some of the great towns there are rates, but they are levied on no uniform principle, and it is impossible for the managers to foresee from year to year what demands may be made on their resources for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the overseers. In some cases in London, where the chief difficulty arises, there are no rates levied on these schools at all. In other cases the rates levied are merely nominal in amount. In the third class of cases, again, the schools are rated below their value, while in the remainder the full rating permitted by law is exacted. Now, a system so different in its principles and so uncertain in its incidence is one which really cannot stand criticism, and we propose, by a simple enactment, to put Voluntary Schools in the position already occupied by scientific and learned institutions, and say that they shall not be liable to rates at all. [*Cheers.*] It may be said, and I dare say it will, that to relieve Voluntary Schools from rates is in effect equivalent to giving relief out of the rates. It will or may be said that, inasmuch as the total rateable value of a parish in which the Voluntary School is situated is diminished thereby, the rates must be augmented, though it probably is only to a very slight extent, by the other ratepayers, and that this is in effect equivalent to a system of relieving Voluntary Schools out of the rates. I do not at all propose to quarrel with words. If anybody likes to maintain that thesis he will not find me a violent opponent. But let it be understood that if that be regarded as allocating support to Voluntary Schools out of the rates, it is so to the same extent, and not to a greater extent, that the rates are allocated now in aid, let us say, of Nonconformist chapels; and if you say we are going to propose rate aid, then you must admit that it is already given, not only to churches and scientific institutions, but to all places of religious worship, Nonconformist or otherwise, which are used exclusively for this purpose. When that fact has once caught hold of the general mind of the House I do not think any great objection will be raised, or, indeed, be anticipated, from either side to this relief, which is very material in certain parts of the Metropolis, but which will not, in fact, bear heavily at all upon any portion of ratepayers either in town or country. The total amount of rates now levied from Voluntary Schools in the vast and wealthy metropolitan area is little over £10,000 a year; and little as it is, relatively speaking, in London, it is still smaller in some other parts of England and Wales. So much for the first of the three provisions which the Bill contains. The second to which I must refer is that which relieves Elementary Day Schools from the 17s. 6d. limit. This provision, and this provision alone, in the Bill extends beyond the province of Voluntary Schools, and includes within its scope Board Schools also. I do not know that I need expend very much time in defending this provision of the Bill. The 17s. 6d. limit, though as it was originally passed it was a great boon to Voluntary Schools, conferred upon them by the Conservative Government of 1874, has long been regarded as a fragment of an ancient system which is scarcely capable of further defence. It is extremely unequal in its operation and extremely arbitrary. As the House knows, a school may earn 17s. 6d. from the Exchequer without expending a single penny upon maintenance from any other source, but it cannot earn 17s. 7d. without finding a contribution of 17s. 7d. to meet it. That is not a state of things which can be defended, and, observe, it is felt most by the very class of schools we most desire to assist—I mean the schools which are so efficiently conducted that they could earn a greater grant, but by the poverty of their surroundings and the circumstances in which they find themselves are debarred from obtaining that advantage which is given to their richer brethren. ["Hear, hear!"] I feel that in a Bill to relieve necessitous schools the omission of the 17s. 6d. would be a serious blot, and one it would not be in my power to defend. I now come to the only remaining provision of the Bill which requires any explanation from me; it relates to the aid grant and to the mode of its distribution. It will be in the recollection of the House that when I withdrew the Bill of last year I made a promise to the Voluntary Schools that whatever else happened in consequence of that withdrawal, they and their interests at all events should not be allowed to suffer. That pledge, Sir, we have fulfilled in the present Bill. Whereas the Bill of last year only allocated 4s. per child in average attendance to the Voluntary Schools, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has permitted me to raise that amount to 5s.—[*cheers*]—the result of which will be that whereas the most that would have been spent last year upon Voluntary Schools had the Bill become law would have amounted to £489,000, the amount that will be spent in the next financial year when this Bill becomes law will be £616,500, a large increase, partly, no doubt, due to the increasing number of children in Voluntary Schools—["Hear, hear!"]—but due in a still larger measure to the additional 1s. grant which my right hon. Friend has sanctioned. Therefore, Sir, that pledge, at all events, has been, as I think will be admitted on all sides, amply satisfied by the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] But that is not, in my judgment, the greatest improvement, the only or the greatest improvement with regard to the allocation of the aid grant which has been introduced into the new Bill. It will be remembered that the Bill of last year turned entirely upon the local authority. It was through the local authority and it was in the area controlled by the local authority that the aid grant was spent, and the invariable result of that must have been that money would not have gone so far or have been so effectively used in dealing with the worst cases as it may be under a more flexible system dealing probably with larger areas than those the country authority proposed to be set up had under its supervision. Of course, every 1s of this total sum of £616,000 which goes to a school which does not require it, or goes to a school which requires it less than another school, is *pro tanto* not used to the best advantage, and we have been most desirous of devising some scheme by which, as far as human ingenuity can contrive it, every penny of the money shall be used to the greatest possible benefit of the schools. The authority responsible for the distribution under this Bill must necessarily and obviously, as we think, be the Education Department. As the money is money provided by the central Treasury, the body which is to deal with the distribution of that money must be responsible to the Imperial Parliament—it must, as we think, in the ultimate result, be a Government Department responsible to Parliament through the Minister at the head of that Department, who is to have the responsibility of distributing that very large sum of public money; but to ask the Government Department to make a comparative estimate of all the schemes for Voluntary Schools in England and Wales without any assistance appears to us to throw upon that Department a burden which it can hardly be asked to bear. For that reason and other reasons, to which I shall refer immediately, we propose to encourage to the best of our ability the formation of associations of Voluntary Schools—["Hear, hear!" *and* "Oh, oh!"]—who shall have the right, not indeed to control the distribution of this money amongst the schools forming them, but to advise the Department how the money may be best expended, to frame schemes—in other words, for its distribution amongst the various schools of which the associations are composed. I frankly say the beneficial working of this Bill largely depends upon the manner in which those interested in Voluntary Schools use the power of association given them. If, as I most earnestly hope, they use it largely, if the great body of Voluntary Schools in this country are brought into organisation, I think that the result will not merely be that the money which is placed at their disposal will be probably better spent for the promotion of education and the support of the schools than it could be under any other plan, but there will be a common feeling aroused and common machinery brought into existence which will have the very best effect upon the educational and religious efficiency of all schools which take care to join an association. Any association approved by the Education Department will have a right to that definite share of the aid grant. Having a right to that definite share it will have the power to frame a scheme for its distribution, which the Department will, of course, have the power to reject or modify, but which will, I anticipate, in all probability usually guide the Department in the discretion vested in it by the Bill. In this case the interests of the Education Department—that is to say, of education—and those of the associations are, from the very nature of the case, and must be, identical. The associations have, and can have, no other object than the promotion of the efficiency of the schools which form them. Individual managers isolated, it may be, from the operation of public opinion other than that of a small secluded parish may in certain cases allow these questions to slide, but an association must have those interests ever before its mind. The associations will be able to give not merely pecuniary assistance, but assistance in many other ways to their constituent units, and, unless I am greatly deceived, if the Voluntary Schools take full advantage of the liberty to form associations which they are encouraged to take, I think that every friend of education, let alone every friend of the Voluntary system, will have every reason to congratulate himself upon the result which this Bill is likely to produce. I ought to say that so strongly do we believe in the importance of association that we have put in a special provision enabling the Education Department to refuse any assistance out of the aid grant to any school which unreasonably refuses to join the association—["Oh, oh!"]—provided always that no school shall be required to join the association where the majority in the school belongs to a different denomination. There is one other point of great importance which I am most desirous of making very clear to the Committee. In the Bill the Education Department have the right to draw a distinction between town and country, and while the total amount given to the Voluntary Schools over England and Wales is determined by the rate which I have just indicated—namely, 5s. per child on the average attendance—the Education Department have a right to say that town schools, or rather associations containing more town schools than other associations, shall get a larger proportion of grant. Let the Committee not suppose that that means a country school is to get less than a town school. There are many town schools which ought to get much less than 5s., and I hope that under the Bill they will get less. But undoubtedly those districts in which there is a large urban population have greater need than the Voluntary Schools in rural districts, and this for more than one reason. In the first place, the urban schools, especially in the North, suffered very much by the Free Education Act. [*Ministerial cheers.*] The schools in country districts benefited by the Free Education Act. There is one county in England which gained as much, I think, as 7s. per child in average attendance by the 10s. fee grant which freed Voluntary Schools. While there are counties in that position, there are urban districts where Voluntary Schools were largely supported out of fees, which fees they no longer pay, and which amounted to more than the inadequate 10s., and which they were to be recouped out of the central Exchequer. If that reason is not enough it is manifest that the educational needs of urban districts and the expense of satisfying those needs must, on the whole, be greater than the corresponding needs of rural districts. You have only to look at the expense to which Board Schools go in the education of urban children to see what their view of the situation is. Though I am far from denying that there are, indeed, some Board Schools which are culpably extravagant, the broad fact remains that urban education is more costly than rural education, and the urban power of getting subscriptions does not keep pace with it. Therefore, this general provision of the Education Department is one which I am convinced will greatly add to the utility of the Bill.

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): Will the right hon. Gentleman say what the provision is?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Hon. Gentlemen opposite found t so clear that I felt I was understood by the Committee. Let us suppose the Bill in full operation in the manner in which the Government hope it will work, should then conceive that the greater part of the Voluntary Schools of the ountry would organise themselves into ssociations. There will no doubt be a nargin of schools which cannot be so rganised. They will not be penalised or not forming themselves into an organisation. Of those in association each ssociation will receive an amount of noney corresponding to the number of cholars in average attendance in the chools composing it, subject only to the act that if there be many urban schools hey will get more than the average 5s., nd if many rural schools they will get ess. [AN HON. MEMBER: "How much?"] That is left to the Education Department. [*Opposition murmurs.*] These vill manifestly remain over the non-associated schools. They will have available or distribution among them an equal mount of 5s. each, subject to the distinction of town and country. It is very ikely that the whole of the money will not be distributed by the Education Department, because, presumably, the chools that will refuse to associate will be the rich schools, and possibly certain ther schools may, for adequate reasons, efuse to associate themselves, and thus be deprived of the grant. It is possible, herefore, there may be a margin over n that account. That will be again distributed by the Education Department mong the associated schools.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will the schools not associated be ealt with directly by the Education Department?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, they will have to make the est estimate they can of their needs naided by the advice of the association. t is, perhaps, unnecessary for me to say hat we do not propose to alter or interere in any way with the management of he Voluntary Schools. That is altoether outside the scope of our desire. We provide that any school receiving he grant shall have its accounts audited the satisfaction of the Education Department, and we consider that that proision with regard to associations will do a great deal not merely to support the schools which are necessitous, but to improve the inefficiency of those which are inefficient. I think I have now made the general scope of the Bill clear. Let me say the Bill is not a difficult Bill to understand. If hon. Gentlemen will allow it to be read a First time and printed there will be no obscurity surrounding it. It only remains that I should give the general connection which, in our view, subsists between this scheme and the present position of the education controversy.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the grant in aid take effect during the present financial year?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I doubt whether it will be possible to get the Bill through in time.

MR. DILLON: A pledge was given that the grant in aid should take effect during the present financial year, and that the Voluntary Schools should lose nothing by it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Voluntary Schools will lose nothing by this Bill not being passed last year. On the contrary, they will have gained immensely. If the Bill of last year had passed they would have got a sum estimated at about £100,000 in the last quarter of this year, and they would have gone on getting money at the rate of £480,000 a year. They now get £618,000 a year for ever—[*Opposition laughter*]—or, if not for ever, until some right hon. Gentleman opposite has the courage to take the money away from them. ["Hear, hear," *and a laugh.*] There remain only one or two words for me to say as to our view of the relation of this Bill to the present position of the education controversy which has raged with so much warmth, I might almost say bitterness, during the last year and a-half. Let it be noted that the Bill rests entirely on the substructure of the Bill of 1870. That Bill came from its Parliamentary ordeal battered out of recognition by its original framers by the conflicting forces of the two sides, and the result is that we have in England at this moment a system of education which has indeed its merits, but which no human being pretends is symmetrical or logical. The Irish system is a symmetrical and logical one; so is the Scotch. The Scotch system, let me remind hon.

Gentlemen opposite, gives power to the education authority of each parish to teach any religious symbol which it desires—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh"]—a right which is availed of in nine-tenths or ninety-nine hundredths of the parochial schools in Scotland. While Ireland and Scotland have systems capable of logical defence, we in England undoubtedly live under a system the inconsistencies of which a child can point out. Nothing can be more absurd than the compromise which has worked not unsatisfactorily for these last 25 years. Can anything, for example, be more absurd than to have in one parish where there happens to be a Voluntary School with rich subscribers, but where, it may be, the great mass of the population are Dissenters, the children of the latter compelled to go to a school where there is religious teaching of which the mass disapprove, and yet the latter are prevented from getting any funds out of the rates to build a school of their own, while in the next parish you may have an equal injustice on the other hand? ["Hear, hear!"] You may have a large population of members of the Church of England too poor to obtain a Voluntary School and with a School Board school thrust upon them where they are absolutely precluded from teaching the symbols of the religion they profess. ["Hear, hear!"] That is absolutely indefensible. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not know that anyone tries to defend it. ["Hear, hear!"] This is an inconsistent system which has such strange doctrines advanced as that in the abstract it may be right and is right to spend the taxpayers' money upon undenominational education, but in the abstract it is wrong to spend that money upon denominational education. ["Hear, hear!"] These are anomalies which no one can defend. I might go on, but there are too many of these cases. There is the case of the unfortunate clergyman or priest in a very poor district of some manufacturing town who is hardly able to scrape together the pence which enable him to keep going his Voluntary School which he thinks necessary for the proper religious education of his flock, and at the same time you oblige him to pay a rate to a School Board of which he disapproves —a rate amounting to comparatively an immense sum out of the wretched income he enjoys. ["Hear, hear!"] If that is a grievance to the Church, surely there is the grievance also of the Nonconformists in cases where, because the ground is already occupied by a denominational school, it is impossible for those who do not like the religious teaching given there to get any assistance for any other school out of the public funds. ["Hear, hear!"] None of us can pretend that this is a good system or one which will bear argument, or that it is symmetrical in design. But it has this one immense advantage—it does allow scope both for a system of denominational religious teaching on the one hand and teaching which is not denominational on the other. ["Hear, hear!"] And it is because the system is big enough and roomy enough for both these methods of education that so far it has not been found unworthy of the general favour of the English public. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not going to argue as to the necessity or advantage of denominational religious teaching. I hold and have publicly expressed very strong personal views upon this subject, and I shall not trouble the House with them again. But I want the House to remember that it is really folly to suppose that if the denominational schools are starved out of existence the people of this country will ever consent to acquiesce in the undenominational teaching they tolerate in the Board Schools— ["hear, hear"]—as long as a denominational system stands side by side with it. ["Hear, hear!"] If anyone chooses to say that matters in which Christians are agreed are infinitely more important than those in which Christians differ—if they say "You ought to be able to found a system of doctrine common to all religious denominations"—I point to the historic fact that all through time and by the necessities of human nature you can only get religious education of adults or children taught by a religious organisation, and that all religious organisations have been associated with a definite doctrinal basis. ["Hear, hear!"] There is no use arguing against facts like these. ["Hear, hear!"] I am convinced that there is no hope of educational peace in this country if at any moment the Board School system were to succeed in squeezing out the voluntary system. But there is a real danger that this may take place. I am not going through the well-worn history of the 3d. rate. Everyone who has any tincture of the knowledge of this subject is aware that no one can be expected to see the great cost and the extravagance of education as conducted by the School Board. [*Cheers and cries of* "No!"] I make no general charge. I say that the great cost and occasionally great extravagance—[*cheers and cries of* "No!"]—well, I do not wish to be controversial, and therefore I will say simply the great cost of School Board education, which is all that is necessary for my argument. The result of that has been to throw an ever increasing strain upon the not illimitable resources of the Voluntary Schools. That is a familiar story known by everyone. It is not merely in the interests of those hon. Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House, who are attached as I am to a system of denominational religious teaching, but in the interest of those who are attached to the undenominational system, that I say that both Parties should try to make this Bill a workable success. [*Cheers.*] I have seen symptoms in more than one Party of desire to use the present crisis in education for the purpose of upsetting the Act of 1870 and to build a new educational building upon new foundations. Some hon. Friends of mine upon this side of the House wish that there should be a general system introduced which should place denominational teaching upon a very different basis from that on which it now rests. With every sympathy for their aims I may say that, in my judgment, they are unwise for two reasons—in the first place, because I do not think the public opinion of this country is ripe, or will be ripe for many years, if ever, for the sort of change which they desire. ["Hear, hear!"] At all events, it is not ripe at the present time. ["Hear, hear!"] A Government which should attempt to pass such a gigantic measure would not have at its command a sufficient force to carry it through. [*Cheers.*] There are some of those friendly critics who say, "You have an enormous majority at your back. Do you mean to say that with such a majority you cannot carry any Bill you desire to pass?" Friendly critics who make that observation are at liberty to deal as they please with Government proposals, but the liberty they ask for themselves is one which they can scarcely refuse to others. ["Hear, hear!"] While I do not doubt that they will be found zealous supporters of the Government policy if it squared with their own views, they can hardly seek to impose a discipline upon others of our followers which these Gentlemen themselves are the last to accept in their own case. [*Cheers.*] I have a second objection to this attempt to repeal the whole scheme of our voluntary education, and it is this—no human being can tell what would be the issue of such an attempt. [*Cheers.*] I do not mean the issue to the Government—for that is a small matter—nor to the Party, for they exist for the community—but my belief is that it is impossible for any man to foresee what system of education would issue from a general controversy in which the whole subject of the Act of 1870 would be thrown into the melting pot. ["Hear, hear!"] Until I can see my way more clearly I shall regard such a policy with some mistrust. If those who wish, in the interests of denominational education, to upset the Act of 1870—or those who wish to keep intact that Act of 1870, see with pleasure the gradual operation of those laws which at the present moment are starving out of existence Voluntary Schools—their error from their own point of view, it seems to me, is profound. If their wish could be fulfilled and it were even possible for Voluntary Schools to maintain the struggle for a long period, and we were to introduce the system of undenominational schools, then the whole educational compromise under the Act of 1870 would come to an end. A new state of things would be brought into existence, and it would be impossible for this or any other Government to allay the educational storm which would sweep the country from one end to the other. [*Cheers.*] It may be said that the Bill is an attempt to patch up a rotten system—the system of 1870. It may be said that the building was never well planned or symmetrical, and that it never satisfied the taste of its legislative architects. All that is true—[*cheers*]—but I confess that it is no reproach to a practical statesman to say that he endeavours to make the best of the building in which he lives. ["Hear hear!"] If the Voluntary Schools will take full advantage of the present Bill, which I hope will pass, I believe that they will be placed in a position of security that they have not previously occupied. ["Hear, hear!"] But I admit that I may be wrong, and if the Voluntary Schools will not make the best of the opportunity now offered to them, in that case our Bill will fail—in that case the subject will again come up for discussion and treatment in this House. If the signs of the times which meet one in every country in Europe are of any significance as to the future of this country, then I say we shall be in that case involved in religious discussions which certainly will not add to the charity of our public life or to the ease of the Legislature. ["Hear, hear!"] As I have intimated, it is beyond the power of prophecy to say what will happen if everything has to be refashioned from the beginning, and if an attempt is made to meet the views both of those who like the present School Board system and those who like the denominational system. In any case, even if the Bill does fail, I, for my part, shall feel that the Government will have done well to introduce it and try to pass it—as pass it I hope we shall. [*Cheers.*] We shall have done well, because it is our duty to make the best of what we have got. We have done well, because it is our duty to attempt, at all events, without unnecessary controversy, to settle a great controversial question. I shall not regret it, because, after all, the man who prefers, even for a few years, to live out the bitterness of religious disputation and settles, even for a few years, a subject by which the passions of men are so easily moved, may at least accomplish some good by doing his best to settle and set at rest this burning question. The effort, I say, deserves well, not merely of those who support us in the country, but of our bitterest opponents who profess to maintain the present School Board system, and who, if they believe me, will only be rushing to its destruction if they do anything to hasten the decay of the voluntary system, which is part of the great settlement of 1870. ["Hear, hear!"] If there be any obscurity in my exposition, and obscurity I doubt not there has been, it will, I am sure, be remedied by the first glance at the very short Measure I have to introduce, and I would earnestly deprecate any elaborate discussion upon the provisions of a Measure which hon. Members have not seen, and which cannot, in the nature of things, be seen until the Bill is read a first time. I have not the slightest desire to limit the discussion which the House may desire to have on the Measure, but I venture to think that that discussion would be much better taken at a later period than on the motion that the Committee do now assent to this resolution, which I now beg to move:—

"That it is expedient (*a*) to authorise the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament of an aid grant to Voluntary Schools not exceeding 5s. per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools; (*b*) to repeal, as regards Day Schools, so much of Section 19 of the Elementary Education Act, 1876, as imposes a limit on the Parliamentary grant to Elementary Schools in England and Wales; and (*c*) to make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools." [*Cheers.*]

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said there were some things which, in view of the speech they had just heard, and in view of the method by which they were about to engage in discussing what had been laid before them, should be said at once. Now, the method in which the matter had been brought before them was somewhat remarkable. They were under the impression last year that a certain portion of the surplus of 1896 must be assigned very early in the present Session—before March 31—and that was why the House of Commons was being called together so early. [*Cheers.*] They were under the impression that haste was so great that this matter of including Voluntary Schools and excluding Board Schools must be approved before March 31. But now, for the first time, they discovered that the Bill need not be through by March 31. That affected the whole position which the House ought to take up towards the question. What was the question before them, and what was the 4th clause of last year's Bill? It proposed to give part of last year's money to Voluntary Schools and part to Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Some of the Voluntary Schools, as was indicated in the Queen's Speech of last year, were in a precarious position, and in view of the increasing demands upon them it had been admitted that hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House were not hostile to a certain amount of increased grant from Parliament, under reasonable conditions, to necessitous schools, whether Voluntary or Board Schools. Then there were, on the other hand, ratepayers' schools—the Board Schools. What was the genesis of those schools? Some Gentlemen spoke of them as if they were the product of the fancy of certain groups of individuals. They were the schools erected by the community in those poorer parts of the country parishes and in those poorer parts of towns where no rich people resided. They represented the effort of the community to supply education where voluntary effort could not supply it, and to make up, during the last quarter of a century, the terrible arrears of education in the country. What was the policy of the right hon. Gentleman with all the Session before him? Had not the Government encouraged expectations with regard to the poor Board Schools? They had done so, and he hoped to show that those expectations had been greatly increased by them ever since last Session. But what was the attitude which the right hon. Gentleman had taken up? He said that there was this year a considerable surplus, and that he was dealing with money he had now in hand. But were they to be blindfolded in this matter? The House was, it appeared, to pass the Bill for the Voluntary Schools, but it was to be left absolutely in the dark as to what portion of money was going to be assigned to the Board Schools, or what were called necessitous Board Schools. He should have thought that to introduce two separate Education Bills would be calculated to create more friction and waste more time than to introduce one Bill dealing with the whole question. [*Cheers.*] But the Government reserved to themselves the opportunity of having no Bill for the Board Schools at all, notwithstanding the general understanding. [" Hear, hear! "] The result of that would be that the Board Schools to which the Government pledged themselves by last year's Bill to give something out of last year's surplus would, perhaps, get nothing even out of this year's surplus. [" Hear, hear! "] What he wanted to show to the House was what the positon of the Government had been with reference to the ratepayers and their schools during the past 18 months—what promises they had made and undertakings they had entered into which, on this occasion, at any rate, they were absolutely going to disappoint. [" Hear, hear! "] He had observed that when his hon. and learned Friends were conducting a breach of promise case they made a great many quotations from letters and documents concerned. The present case was remarkably analogous to a breach of promise case, and, therefore, he proposed to read a few extracts from documents. [" Hear, hear," *and laughter.*] After the few months available for consideration during the autumn following the General Election, Lord Salisbury spoke one day and the Duke of Devonshire the next day on this subject. That was in November, 1895. Lord Salisbury met a great gathering of Conservative Associations and spoke to them in the following manner:—

> " I wish to point out to you that there are two educational problems. One is to enable those who are educating the people of this country to educate them according to the religious belief of their parents. I believe that to be an essential object, and one of which we ought never to lose sight."

That policy was embodied in Clause 27 of last year's Bill; but that clause was no longer before the House, although, with reference to it, the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich said that it was the only part of last year's Bill which aroused anything like enthusiasm among the friends of religious education. Lord Salisbury continued his speech thus:—

> " The other question is this—How are we to diminish the tremendous burden—and the increasing burden—which the education rate is laying upon many communities in this country?"

The present proposals did nothing directly, and very little indirectly, to diminish these tremendous burdens. [*Cheers.*] The day after Lord Salisbury made this speech, the Archbishops and Bishops, as a deputation from the Church, went to the Duke of Devonshire, as the First Education Minister of this country. He called him " the first Education Minister " because at present there were three Education Ministers. [*Cheers* *and laughter.*] In replying to the deputation, the Duke of Devonshire said:—

> "Probably it is the opinion of many of you that an addition of 5s. would not be an adequate or sufficient sum. But you must remember that a grant of 5s. all round"—[*cheers*]—"would amount to a million of money. What, I presume, is intended by this demand, is a fixed grant all round. I do not conceive that it is proposed by any legislation to depart from the principle of statutory equality as regards State aid to Voluntary and Board Schools." [*Loud Opposition cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: There is no statutory equality.

MR. ACLAND: Is there none now? [*Cheers.*] I am sorry that the new Education Minister has not followed the methods on which the Parliamentary grants are made. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am sorry that the old Education Minister has not followed Section 97 of the Act of 1870.

MR. ACLAND said that of course he was not alluding to certain small grants to schools in poor districts. He was alluding to the £7,000,000 which were voted every year in the Estimates under Class 4. [*Cheers.*] That was what the Duke of Devonshire was alluding to, and that money was allotted on principles of statutory equality between Board and Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] That was the principle on which the Duke of Devonshire evidently conceived that the whole of this matter ought to be treated; but when the Bill of last year was brought in, it was found not to observe that principle, though it was more generous in admitting the principle of relief and help to Board Schools than the present proposals, which had no time limitation whatever. The provisions of last year's Bill admitted two broad principles, which lay quite outside the present proposals. They admitted Board Schools to a share of the Parliamentary grant, and they admitted the principle of representative control. [*Cheers.*] Shortly after the introduction of that Bill, one of the staunchest supporters of the Unionist Government, the hon. Member for the Edgbaston Division of Birmingham, said:—

> "The grant should be a grant all round, and if a clause not giving a grant all round remained in the Bill when it became law, he should vote against the Third reading."

Mr. A. H. Dyke Acland.

The hon. Member should find it easy to vote against the Second Reading of the present proposals, which did nothing at all for Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] The fourth clause of last year's Bill gave only £50,000 to Board Schools; but it was hoped that the question would be fully debated, and that it could be shown that, even from the point of view of the Government, it was not a reasonable way of treating necessitous Board Schools. This hope was encouraged by a letter which the Colonial Secretary wrote to Mr. Ansell, a member of the Birmingham School Board, who objected to the differentiation between Board and Voluntary Schools in the special aid grant. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "I feel that there is, *prima facie*, much to be said on the matter, and I have no doubt that these questions will receive the fullest consideration in the Committee on the Bill."

[*Ironical cheers.*] The Government had taken very good care that questions of that kind should not, as far as they could help it, receive any consideration at all. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken. He seems to think that I have adopted a Parliamentary procedure to assist an attempt to exclude something from the consideration of the Committee. All I have done has been done because I could do nothing else under the rules of this House.

MR. ACLAND said that his contention was that if the Resolution now submitted to the House had contained a proposal to give a certain amount of money to certain poor schools, there would have been no objection on this ground whatever. Then the right hon. Gentleman would not have been "fettered and bound." [*Cheers.*] Then the Opposition would not have been "fettered and bound." [*Cheers.*] If the word "elementary" had been substituted for the word "voluntary" in the Resolution, the Committee would have had the discussion which they ought to have, and which they would have had last year if Clause 4 had been reached. When last year's Bill was being discussed a very remarkable speech was made by a former Education Minister, the right hon. Member for Dartford. With reference to Clause 4, which proposed to give only £50,000 to Board Schools and nearly £500,000 to Voluntary Schools—

> "he thought some change would have to be made with regard to this grant and its distribution. If this was to be a fair and just Bill it must not help the Voluntary Schools and pretend, up to a certain point, to assist the Board Schools, and then secure the one and leave the Board Schools out in the cold."

[*Cheers.*] That would be a good motto for the present procedure. The Government were determined, whatever else happened, to secure the Voluntary Schools, and then, if time permitted—[*laughter*]—they would see whether or not they would leave the Board Schools out in the cold. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Member for Dartford added, in the same speech—

> "Unless this was a fair and just, it could not be a lasting, settlement, but would lead to future controversies and struggles in the House."

[*Cheers.*] So much for the expectations created at the time last year's Bill was withdrawn.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I distinctly stated in July that this Bill would be restricted to Voluntary Schools.

MR. ACLAND said that he would not deny that the right hon. Gentleman had said so, but at that time Clause 4 was so fully in the mind of everyone that there was no thought of nothing being given to the Board Schools in the present Measure. During the Recess there were some remarkable utterances which encouraged the belief that the position of the Board Schools, and of the ratepayers who supported them, was likely to be much better in the new Bill than in that of last year. He would now quote from the second Education Minister. [*Cheers and laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, writing in *The North American Review* in October 1896, said:—

> "In the country the Voluntary Schools are better off than the Board Schools. There is no competition and no necessity for levelling up as in the towns. The Voluntary Schools can hold their own without further pecuniary support." [*Cheers.*] "The rates levied in School Board districts are a greater burden upon the people than the subscriptions in parishes which have Voluntary Schools." [*Cheers.*] "It is rather, indeed, the Board Schools which require financial assistance to enable the instruction given in them to be levelled up to the same efficiency as that given by their rivals."

After such a statement from the Vice President, what was the Government doing? Were they aware that out of 2,500 Boards in this country no less than 1,750 were in districts with less than 3,000 inhabitants? And for these School Boards, which needed levelling up rather than leaving out in the cold, the Government were, for the present, going to do absolutely nothing. [*Cheers.*] Then the right hon. Gentleman wrote an article in the November issue of the *Nineteenth Century*, in which he said that in rural districts where the Board School system was not spreading there were many parishes in which the Voluntary Schools were in no danger of extinction, and he added:—

> "In any grant made by the Exchequer to country schools it would be difficult to defend upon any principle of justice its restriction to those under Voluntary management."

[*Cheers.*] Did the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House wonder after that that the country had expected that something was going to be done for country Board Schools? [*Cheers.*] The Vice-President of the Council then went on:—

> "Two parishes may exist side by side, in which there is equal need of additional funds to make the village school efficient. The parish which is under School Board management is probably the poorer of the two, lacking the wealthier residents whose subscriptions help to keep up the Voluntary School. It has greater burdens, for it has to pay for elections and management as well as for schools. It would be impossible to give a grant from the Exchequer to the richer parish and leave the poorer out in the cold."

[*Cheers.*] But what the head of the Education Department in this House first said would be difficult and then said would be impossible the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had found himself able to do that day. [*Cheers.*] On another occasion, speaking to the metropolitan division of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations, the Vice-President of the Board of Education made the same remark about the two country parishes side by side, one with a School Board and the other without a School

Board, and pointed out that the one without the School Board would get a substantial grant, while the other, although the poorer parish, would get nothing. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to deal with the towns. He said:—

> "In the towns there would be this difficulty—that a town which bore very little burden now, because most of the children were educated in Voluntary Schools, would get a very large grant from the Government, whereas a neighbouring town which had a large number of children in the Board Schools and had only a few Voluntary Schools, would get very little indeed out of the Government; and when the different towns in the kingdom came to examine how much they would get out of a grant of that kind, strong representations would come from many quarters that they were not being treated with justice."

[*Cheers.*] After reading such speeches the friends of the Board Schools believed they had the voice of the Government encouraging them to hope that the case of the Board Schools, instead of getting weaker, was getting stronger and stronger; but now they found that they were on that point entirely mistaken. ["Hear, hear!"] There was a remarkable gathering held at the Church House, Dean's Yard, in November, to consider the education question. What that meeting recommended was an equal grant from the Parliamentary funds to all schools alike—Voluntary and Board—of 6s. per child, and they added, as an essential and vital part of their scheme, a rate-aid grant for children in Voluntary Schools within Board School districts. The Church Conference might fairly say that if rate-aid in Board School districts was withdrawn their whole scheme fell to the ground. He therefore did not want to draw any unjust conclusions from the recommendations of that meeting; but he would point out that there were 4½ millions of children approximately in average attendance in all schools. Of those, approximately, two milions were in Board Schools and 2½ millions approximately in Voluntary Schools. Voluntary Schools might be divided roughly into halves—one-half in Board School districts where there was a Board School rate, and the other half in non-Board School districts where there was no such rate. If the Church Conference could have obtained from the Government a grant either from the rates or from the State, which would be a grant to the extra necessitous in the Board School districts, then on that assumption the Church Conference were willing to treat all their children in non-Board School districts on an equality with Board School children, and give them an equal grant from the Imperial fund. It seemed to him that that tended to show that the Church Conference, if their own case had been met, were willing to take a more generous view of grants of Imperial aid, whether to Board or to Voluntary Schools, than the Government themselves took. ["Hear, hear!"] But without pressing that point too far, he would come to the methods of giving and distributing the money as proposed by the Government. The proposition this year was that £620,000 was to be given to the Voluntary Schools, or £125,000 more than last year; whereas, in the case of the Board Schools, instead of an increase, there was *nil*—a reduction of £50,000. That meant that when they took the equivalent grant for Ireland and Scotland—

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): This is not a case for an equivalent grant at all.

MR. ACLAND: Surely there will be an equivalent grant, for some purpose or another, to Ireland and Scotland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The question of education has not been treated in the way of equivalent grants at all. Ireland has more than her equivalent grant.

MR. ACLAND: Then do I understand that Ireland is to receive no equivalent at all for this gift of over half-a-million to a certain portion of the English community? Do I understand also that Scotland, which has been so long in the van of education, will receive no equivalent? [*Cheers.*]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The right hon. Gentleman misunderstands me. Of course the question of primary education both in Ireland and Scotland will have to be considered. What I meant by saying that there would be no equivalent grant to Ireland or Scotland is that this question is not to be treated as contributions have been treated in relief of local taxation.

Mr. ACLAND admitted that what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said had somewhat changed his position on that point. What he had meant to say was that if Ireland and Scotland were given equivalent grants the sum which it would be necessary to pay out for the purposes of education or for similar purposes to the three countries would have considerably exceeded three-quarters of a million. However, £620,000 was about to be voted in aid of Voluntary Schools, and that was enough for his purpose. He should like to know in what way was the contribution to be made in this country. Two-thirds of the population of this country who were in School Board districts paid rates for School Boards; and the other third, who were mostly in country districts, did not pay School Board rates. But what did the Government propose to do? They were going to take two-thirds of the money from districts largely urban, where School Board rates were paid, and to hand over a very considerable portion of it to districts largely rural where no School Board rates were paid at all. So far as that was the case, it was the policy of the Agricultural Rating Act of last year. [*Cheers.*] He agreed with the First Lord of the Treasury that in a complicated matter of this kind it was hardly advisable at present to attempt an analysis of the particular method of distribution. But he thought he might assume that Lancashire was not going to suffer under the Bill of this year as compared with the Bill of last year, and also that the Voluntary Schools of Lancashire would get on an average not much less than 5s. per child. Then, assuming that in the case of Lancashire there would be a 5s. grant all round and in the case of London a 5s. grant all round, what would be the position of the taxpayer in London as compared with the taxpayer in Lancashire? Lancashire would get on that basis about £114,000, while London, which had almost exactly the same number of children all told, Voluntary and Board, in average attendance, would on the same basis only get about £44,000, or £70,000 a year less than Lancashire. [*Cheers.*] He commended that to the attention of the London Members. [*Cheers.*] The London ratepayer, who paid a rate twice as high as did the Lancashire ratepayer, instead of getting twice as much money was going to get £70,000 a year less. He wished to plead the case of Manchester before the right hon. Gentleman. [*Ironical cheers.*] He would contrast Manchester with some other towns which had not such poor districts as Manchester, and where the community had not been obliged, in order to provide education for its children, to build schools at a larger expense to the ratepayers. He would take the case of three Lancashire boroughs which got about the same number of Voluntary School children as Manchester—Bury, Preston, and St. Helens. He found that they had something like 40,000 children in Voluntary Schools, while so had Manchester. If Manchester had no other children to look after, then Manchester would be on an equality with Bury, Preston, and St. Helens; but then there was the case of all the remaining Manchester children, to the number of 33,000, who were in Board Schools and who were not getting a penny out of this Bill. The Manchester ratepayer paid certainly a sixpenny rate, if he were not mistaken, and a very considerable amount—he thought 17s. or 18s. per child—to the Board Schools. But the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do nothing whatever towards all these Board School children in Manchester, although there were 33,000 more of them to deal with than in those three boroughs which were going to get 5s. for every one of their children. His surprise was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Manchester should treat the Manchester and Lancashire ratepayers in this way. [*Ironical cheers.*] He had in his hand an interesting card which was sent out to the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman at the last General Election in Manchester. On one side it had two trumpeters and a crown—[*laughter*]—over the two trumpeters, who carried flags on their trumpets, were written the words, "Security and prosperity." [*Laughter and Ministerial cheers.*] Under the crown is written the word "Progress," and at the bottom of this picture—

> "Your vote and interest are respectfully solicited on behalf of the right hon. Gentleman, Arthur James Balfour, Unionist candidate for East Manchester."

Then followed the name of the printer and publisher in Manchester, and the words "See over." He saw over, and there he found the words at the top, "The programme of the Unionist Party under 15 heads"—[*laughter*]—and between the "exclusion of pauper aliens" and "Church Defence"—and he was certain there was not a word in this programme as to assistance to Voluntary Schools—he found these remarkable words, "Poor Law and School Board rates to be charged on the Imperial Exchequer." [*Laughter and ironical cheers.*] Here they were in Committee of Ways and Means, dealing with the funds of the Imperial Exchequer, and the present time he should have thought an eligible opportunity for dealing with the matter. He commended that view of the right hon. Gentleman to some of the boroughs in Lancashire which paid School Board rates besides Manchester. Then there was the case of Birmingham, five boroughs at least in Staffordshire, the large boroughs in the West Riding—Leeds, Halifax, Sheffield, places like Yarmouth, Norwich, and even in the South like Croydon and Brighton. If these cases were looked into it would soon be seen what a large share of the taxation might be given to them if they were dealt with on the Duke of Devonshire's principle of statutory equality, and what a very small portion they would get under this proposal. He left out of sight the whole question of what were called the poor Board School districts, places like West Ham, Walthamstow, Romford, and Tottenham—all of these were to be dealt with this Session on the principle, probably, of nothing for most of them, and, if time permitted, a little for some of them. So far as he could discover there was nothing whatever to guarantee that the voluntary subscriptions to Voluntary Schools were to be maintained, although it had often been asserted by Leaders of the opposite side, and by Archbishops and Bishops, that they ought to do everything in their power to keep up voluntary subscriptions in order to preserve the very name of Voluntary Schools. The late Archbishop of Canterbury said that the North was not qualifying—qualifying, he said, meant paying subscriptions; and, he added, he had never got an answer to the question why the people of the North should get admission to all the rates for a subscription of 3s. 6d. for each child, when their subscription in the South was 10s. 6d. There was nothing in what the right hon. Gentleman said which appeared to give any guarantee whatever that a good deal of this money might not be poured into the Voluntary Schools—no doubt for an excellent purpose—and a good deal of it be wasted by coming out of them again at the other end in the form of a reduction of subscriptions. No doubt they should hear more about that before this Bill had passed, but he would take this opportunity of saying that the State abandoned any encouragement of the idea of local support. The 17s. 6d. limit, which they called so wicked, and which was an invention of the Tory Government of 1876, was now to be abolished, and the State laid down principles for the future that demanded no local support whatever to meet the support which came from the Exchequer.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman has no right whatever to say that; he has not seen the Bill.

MR. ACLAND said he should, of course, be glad to hear if there was some provision which the right hon. Gentleman had not mentioned, but the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit was generally supposed to mean the abolition of any condition remaining on the Statute Book by which local subscribers were expected to contribute something to meet the grant. ["Hear, hear!"] With reference to the rating of school buildings there was no doubt that there were some districts in London and other places where he did not think the ratepayers would be afraid to say that to some extent this proposal was a giving of rate aid to Voluntary Schools. He quite agreed that in many country places the amount which would be laid upon the ratepayers would be very small. He thought, however, he was bound to give, at any rate, one case—that of the parish of St. George-the-Martyr in Southwark—where Voluntary Schools were very moderately rated, much more so than the Board Schools, and yet in that parish the Voluntary Schools would not in future pay the £165 which they had been in the habit of paying. That sum broken up among the children in the Voluntary Schools came to 1s. 6d. per child, so that these children would receive not only 5s. each from the Exchequer, but also 1s. 6d. each from the ratepayer. There was not to be a word in the Bill as to any change of management in the Voluntary Schools. Last year, according to the evidence of the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, and other Members, the Bill gave control to the ratepayers in a form which did not prove satisfactory to the House; it could not be laid merely to their account that the scheme broke down, when they remembered the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for the Honiton Division of Devonshire. Now they had withdrawn any control scheme whatever. They must bear in mind that this subject was growing more and more important in the feelings especially of the people in the country districts. Would it not be well to listen to the moderate counsels of Lord Northbrook, who was chairman of his county council and knew the county districts in the South of England well, who, writing to the Bishop of Winchester, said that in his opinion there ought to be on the management of country schools representation of the parents, or representation of the parish council? ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that if they knew the minds of some hon. Gentlemen opposite they would say that they were not themselves in favour in many country districts of the extremely limited clerical control which in many places alone held sway. ["Hear, hear."] He thought they would say they would like to see all country schools follow the example of some of the best Voluntary country schools where parents were represented, and sometimes even the Parish Council or the parish meeting. It seemed to him a source of great regret that, having given them some idea that the Government believed in the principle of control, and were not afraid of it last year, they asked for this enormous sum to Voluntary Schools this year, and withdrew entirely from any position they might have taken up with regard to the representation of either parents or inhabitants on the management of Voluntary Schools. Looking at the general educational aspects of the proposition laid before the Committee, he had to say that the administration from the centre was difficult in any case. It was more difficult, as the Leader of the House suggested, than the system either of Ireland or of Scotland. The subject stirred some of the deepest and strongest feelings they could find in man. By the present proposal, on the one hand, they were embarrassing and making more difficult the administration at the centre and in the country at large; among those who were interested in the cause of the ratepayers' schools they were raising a feeling, by keeping them out in the cold, of irritation and exasperation which they could not expect easily to allay. All this was injurious to true education. [*Cheers.*] It was going to make their progress in the uncontentious matters of education, which were so important to this country, more difficult than it was before. It was going to raise, in a form which never had been raised, an antagonistic spirit with reference to the way in which the Government dealt with elementary education. The hon. and learned Member for Warwick and Leamington, in seconding the Address to the Speech from the Throne, urged them to take a very moderate line on educational questions. But it was not quite so easy to take a moderate line when the question was treated in the way in which it was to be treated now—["Hear, hear!"]—when one Party to the bargain, one strong claimant for help, was left absolutely outside. As to the Act of 1870, did the Government think they were preserving it by the methods and the proposal now laid before them? They were trustees there for all those who bore the burden in regard to education, whatever kind of school they supported. They must do their best, and he hoped some hon. Gentlemen on the other side would help them, to fight out what were really the broad issues of this question. [*Cheers and counter-cheers.*] The principles of the Act of 1870 were the principles of equality. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial cries of* "Rates."] He did not wish to say one word of threat, but he would quote the words of the Duke of Devonshire when he met a clerical deputation at Birmingham:—

> "Where once the principles of the Act of 1870 had been departed from," he said, "it is of course open to your opponent to regard the settlement then arrived at as completely at an end. I think it will be prudent on the part of the managers of Voluntary Schools to remember that the existence of Parliament is not perpetual."

[*Cheers.*] The Government had had a great opportunity. They had a huge surplus last year; they would have a great surplus this year. They had an immense majority in the House of Commons, and they had had—he said it without hesitation—on many points a not unreasonable minority. With all these advantages, and with no limit of time to hold them back, he thought it was a matter of profound regret that they had taken such a Measure, and that they had selected such a manner to put their Measure into force. [*Cheers.*] The Government had laid before the Committee a Measure which went back upon the expectations which they had created in the minds of those who were interested in the Board Schools of this country. They had put them in a position in which only half the case could be fully dealt with, and they had deliberately shut out the Board Schools into the cold. They had chosen a method of dealing with this matter in the House of Commons which, he ventured to say, prejudiced even their own case, which was unjust to the ratepayers and taxpayers, and which was gravely unfair to their representatives in the House of Commons. [*Cheers.*]

MR. R. JEBB (Cambridge University) trusted his right hon. Friend opposite would pardon him if he ventured to express the opinion that, while he devoted a large portion of his speech to details, he did not altogether succeed in presenting a fair general view of the circumstances under which this Bill had been produced or of the intentions of the First Lord of the Treasury. [*Cheers.*] The Bill was confined to the object of affording a limited amount of relief, at as early a date as might be practicable, of an urgently needed kind. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the urgency he ventured to say there could be no dispute. [*Cheers.*] It was certain that, if such aid was not afforded at a reasonably early date, very large numbers of their Voluntary Schools would be threatened with extinction—["hear, hear!"]—and it was not disputable that if the Voluntary Schools were to perish there would be cast upon the ratepayers a new annual burden exceeding £4,000,000. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the amount of relief which the Bill proposed to give, he confessed that in his opinion it fell short of that which the supporters of Voluntary Schools might rightfully claim. ["Hear, hear!"] He held the view formulated by the meeting of the two Convocations at the Church House, and put forward on behalf of the Roman Catholics of this country by their hierarchy, that supporters of Voluntary Schools were entitled, not merely in return for what they had done and were doing, but simply as citizens and ratepayers, to share in that education rate raised within school districts which they helped to pay. [*Cheers.*] That, however, was not in question at the present time. It had been assumed throughout his speech by his right hon. Friend opposite that the Leader of the House did not really intend to introduce a Bill for the relief of the necessitous Board Schools. He submitted there was absolutely no ground for such an assumption as that. [*Cheers.*] The Leader of the House told them quite plainly and frankly that he did not intend to introduce such a Measure at an early date, and it might be in the knowledge of some Members that a few days ago there appeared in the Press a letter addressed by the First Lord of the Treasury to the hon. Member for West Ham in which a similar pledge was given in the most distinct and unequivocal terms. There was, therefore, absolutely no ground for asserting over and over again that the necessitous Board Schools were to be left out in the cold. ["Hear, hear!"] But it was impossible to discuss this Bill without touching on a question which lay at the root of the whole matter, and that was the policy of giving public money to denominational schools. There were two views of elementary education competing in this country, and that competition was at the root of all their controversies on this subject. One view was—and he desired to state it as fairly as he could—that education might be satisfactory, although it was very largely secular, or else tempered by religious instruction according to a standard which might vary in each municipality. The religious instruction might be such as to satisfy even some Church people. It might be such as to satisfy all Christians; it might be such as to be acceptable to all Christians *plus* the Unitarians; it might be such as to be acceptable to all persons who acknowledged the existence of a God; it might be such as to be accepted even by those who did not. That was the present state of the religious element in the Board Schools' instruction.

The other view was that since education tended to form character and to aim at forming character, and since religion was most potent for that purpose, education should be based upon its teaching, and that if this religious teaching was to have that fundamental place in education it must be definite. [" Hear, hear!"] It could not be denied that parents had a right to choose in which of these two views their children were to be educated —the Board School view or the Voluntary School view. [" Hear, hear!"] About three-sevenths, or, as his right hon. Friend said, four-ninths, at all events less than half, of the children of the country now receive elementary education in Board Schools, and more than half in Voluntary Schools. The State imposes elementary education on all. The State, therefore, has no moral right to penalise any of its citizens for preferring that view presented by the Voluntary Schools. [" Hear, hear!"] If the State does that it enforces on the community an arbitrary and a narrow idea of education, and fines them for not keeping to it. Before 1870 no one would have dreamed of such a thing. Board Schools were set up, not to supplant, but to supplement Voluntary Schools. [" Hear, hear!"] The doctrine that Board Schools should be universal and that education based on religious and sectarian caprice, in which eccentric persons chose to indulge, should be paid for as they would pay for any other expensive luxury, was not only a novel doctrine, but repugnant to common sense and common justice. [" Hear, hear!"] But it was very justly urged that when public money was given to denominational schools there should be representative control of those schools. [" Hear, hear!"] All recognised that. His right hon. Friend who had just sat down said the Bill would not give representative control. What was the form of public aid to be given? If it was to be a grant from the State, then the form of control correlative to State aid would be central control by the State; but if it was to be rate aid, then the correlative control would be local control. But they had not to do with rate aid, and therefore nothing to do with local control. What form of central control could be more complete and effectual than that the Bill proposed to give—the control of the Education Department? [" Hear, hear!"] Take the case of those schools which grouped themselves in association. Each such federation was to prepare a scheme which was to be submitted to the Education Department, and this scheme was to indicate how it was proposed to allocate the grant the federation would receive in its collective capacity among several schools belonging to it. The scheme would have to be submitted to the Education Department, and with the Department would lie the right to modify or reject the scheme. Suppose the Education Department had reason to know from the evidence of its inspectors that a particular school was in an efficient state, it would have the power to diminish or withhold that portion of the grant the federation proposed to apply to that school. Take the case of particular schools which did not federate for any reason, in regard to each of these the Education Department would have the right to withhold the grant on the ground of inefficiency. [" Hear, hear!"] But, moreover, it could withhold it simply on the ground that a particular school had unreasonably declined to join a federation; while it was provided that a school which was denominationally isolated should not be made to join a federation of which the majority of schools belonged to another denomination. If these guarantees that grants should not go to non-efficient schools were not adequate, he really did not know what guarantee could be so. [" Hear, hear!"] Then it had been urged outside the House, in anticipation of the Bill, and no doubt the topic would come up again in course of discussion before the Bill passed, that public money should not be given to any denominational school unless that school could meet the grant with a certain proportional voluntary subscription. [" Hear, hear!"] Evidently the friends of Voluntary Schools had the strongest of all possible reasons for earnestly desiring and strenuously endeavouring to keep up their subscriptions. And why? Simply for the reason that without that help they could not hope to compete on the strength of State aid alone with Board Schools, which had both State aid and rate aid. [" Hear, hear!"] Board Schools had hitherto had claims on the State; but, in addition, Board

Schools were spending nearly five millions a year on maintenance alone, the total expenditure of the School Boards of England and Wales amounting to about eight and a half millions. What had been done by the subscribers to Voluntary Schools? In 1870 the total amount of annual subscriptions was about £295,000, and at the present time it was more than double that—about £600,000. [" Hear, hear ! "] An hon. Friend reminded him these were Church of England Schools alone, so his argument was the stronger. Since 1870 Church of England Schools alone had expended about seven and a half millions. Then there were school buildings and endowments—what he might call the crystallised form of subscriptions. It was this assistance alone which had made it possible for Voluntary Schools to hold their own against Board Schools, which could respond to every new requirement of the Education Department by drawing on the bottomless purse of the rates. [" Hear, hear ! "] But the point to which he particularly desired to draw attention was this, that you could not fairly lay down the rule that voluntary subscriptions should everywhere and in every case bear a fixed ratio to the amount of State aid. Take the case of poor schools in the poorest parts of the great towns of the north, and as a good instance the Roman Catholic Schools. These, like many of our own Church Schools ministered to the very poorest of the poor. They had fewer sources of aid to which they could look outside the area of their own district and their own communion, and greatly to the honour of the Roman communion they had never yet surrendered one of their schools. Think for a moment what a sacrifice this simple fact implied, and how difficult it would be to raise subscriptions among the poorest populations of these northern towns, and what it meant to impose on these poor people in addition to the duty of providing daily bread for their young children that of saving them from starvation of mind. [" Hear, hear ! "] Those who had charge of these schools had to go far afield and make application to charitable persons all over the country and continually to renew efforts of the most laborious kind to make ends meet. In the case of such districts as these, where from the very nature of the case Voluntary subscriptions could not be merely local, but must be largely non-local, it would be unreasonable to place schools under similar conditions as to the ratio of local subscriptions as those situated in well-to-do districts where subscriptions could be raised with comparative ease. [" Hear, hear ! "] Before sitting down he added a few words on the general relations of the Bill to the prospect of future legislation on this subject. The Bill did not carry, and his right hon. Friend did not claim for it, the character of finality. [" Hear, hear " *from* The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY.] That was no reproach to the Bill. It would be very difficult to say how a final solution of the elementary education problem could be found until the country realised more widely and clearly than it yet had done the true relation of such projects to Mr. Forster's Act of 1870. Some of his hon. Friends had been accustomed to speak of Mr. Forster's Act as a settlement and a compromise. He was sorry to say that if it was once a settlement it had long been unsettled and not fairly to Voluntary Schools. [" Hear, hear ! "] If it was originally a compromise it had come to be a compromise in which the interest of one of the contracting parties was ignored. If it was still observed in the letter it had often been violated, and was often still violated in the spirit. [" Hear, hear ! "] Board Schools were set up not to occupy the whole field of elementary education, but to fill up vacant spaces in it. With diffidence he expressed his feeling that there were only two methods by which the problem of elementary education could be finally dealt with. One method was to give Voluntary Schools a share in the education rate levied in the School Board district, they in return having a fair amount of local control with those safeguards for preserving the distinctive basis and character of the denominational schools. [" Hear, hear ! "] He felt that with a little goodwill and a little trust and confidence on both sides this could be carried out far more easily than many of his hon. Friends supposed. [" Hear, hear ! "] The other method did not lie within the range of present politics. It was that the State should take over the maintenance of all the elementary schools, paying for them out of the taxes, leaving localities and denominations to find the buildings. This did not now seem to be within the range of practical politics, and he was aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could hardly be induced to entertain such an idea unless the country declared for it in an unmistakable manner, but he did not feel so certain that some such plan might not be heard of in years to come. Meantime one thing might be done which would largely facilitate the settlement of this elementary education problem, and that was to draw a line between primary and secondary education. ["Hear, hear!"] He earnestly hoped that Her Majesty's Government might be induced to consider the expediency of introducing legislation at an early date defining elementary education, not merely from the point of view of those solicitous for secondary education, but on account of its intimate bearing on the elementary education of Voluntary Schools. Meanwhile he recognised that this limited Measure was founded on plain and broad grounds of justice. It was to be supplemented at an early date by a Measure giving relief to necessitous Board Schools. While fully recognising the sincerity of the intentions of hon. Gentlemen opposite and the signal services many of them had rendered to the cause of education, he yet contended that those on his side of the House were no less earnest in their desire to promote educational efficiency, and in that spirit he approved of the present proposal. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) remarked that the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken had said that this was a limited Bill, founded on principles of justice, and about to be speedily supplemented by another Bill, which would deal with necessitous Board Schools. The Bill was, indeed, a limited Bill. [*Opposition cheers.*] Those interested in necessitous Board Schools never thought, until within the last few days, that it would be so limited; and it was a Bill wholly opposed to the principles of justice on account of that very limitation. [*Opposition cheers.*] Of course, if the Bill were to be supplemented in a few weeks, or even months, with a certainty of its passing in the present Session, by a Bill dealing with the necessitous Board School districts, they on that side of the House should only now ask why the two portions of the Bill had been dissociated, and why they should be given the trouble of fighting this Bill on the ground that the other matter was not included in it, and then have that other matter dealt with in the present Session by another Bill which they should all accept. The question of the procedure of the House was one of great importance in connection with this question. They were so tied up and limited by the Resolution they were asked to pass, confined as it was to Voluntary Schools, that they would be prevented in Committee from raising the claims of the necessitous Board Schools; and it was therefore necessary and most strictly relevant on this Resolution to discuss the claims of the necessitous Board Schools to equal treatment with that meted out to the Voluntary Schools. As he understood it would not be competent for them to move to extend the scope of the Resolution beyond the Voluntary Schools so as to include the necessitous Board Schools, many hon. Members would be driven to vote against the whole Resolution on the ground of its injustice. ["Hear, hear!"] The Leader of the House had said he was astonished that they should be surprised at the present Bill being limited by the word "Voluntary" in this way. Having been chairman of the conference on this very subject, which represented the Board School authorities in the country, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that it was never for one moment supposed that the Bill would be so limited. ["Hear, hear!"] Last year, when the right hon. Gentleman withdrew the Education Bill, he said, in reference to the Bill of this year, "We shall especially have in view the necessities of the Voluntary Schools." That was what the Government stated in the Queen's Speech of 1896, and when, on the first night of last Session, they were asked whether the necessitous Board Schools would be included, they replied in the affirmative. It was an absolute injustice to attempt to give this money to the Voluntary Schools without, at the same time, considering the poor Board School districts. Did the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Ham consider that the statement made that night by the right hon. Gentleman was equivalent to the assurances contained in the letter he had received from the right hon. Gentleman? Until that night they were all under the belief that the Education Bill was to be passed before March 31. [*Opposition cheers.*] Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman said in his letter that the poor School Board districts were not to be dealt with in the first Bill, they supposed that it would only be a short Bill, which would be hurried through before March 31, so that, even during the present Session, there might be a chance of passing a further Bill dealing with the other portion of the subject.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I hope we shall pass it before March 31.

*SIR C. DILKE: I understood from the right hon. Gentleman earlier in the evening that that would not be so.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The length of time the Bill will take depends not upon me, but upon hon. Gentlemen opposite. I should have thought it would have easily passed before March 31. All I said was I was under no pledge to get it through before, although we would make every effort to do so.

*SIR C. DILKE understood that last year a pledge was given that the £100,000 should be voted in the course of the present financial year, and that the Voluntary Schools would get the money. From that promise he now gathered the right hon. Gentleman had gone back. The Bill which was promised was a simple one, but this, instead of answering that description, was a complicated Measure, and in its federation proposals would undoubtedly receive a good deal of discussion. What was offered to the poor Board Schools was that, if the Bill slipped rapidly through, then it would be possible to deal with their case. That was a very faint hope; it was one which would not be satisfactory to the districts concerned, nor would it meet what had been described by the Vice President of the Council as the crying injustice of the treatment of one-half of the case, without treatment of the other. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to suggest that the rise in the rates in certain districts was owing to extravagance on the part of some of the School Boards. There might have been extravagance in some cases, but he asserted that in the poor districts they had more guarantee against extravagance by the Boards than they had in districts which were not equally poor. The right hon. Gentleman had asked the late Vice-President whether he had done anything towards meeting these poor School Board district cases. The position of the Education Department under the late Government was that whenever a fresh Education Bill had to be brought in the grievances of those districts should be dealt with. That promise was renewed by the present Government, who said the matter should be dealt with and a more favourable treatment extended to the poor School Boards when they came to discuss Clause 4 of last year's Bill. Of course, they never reached Clause 4, but, from what transpired, they thought the Government would be prepared to make even a larger proposal, in this regard, than they did in last year's Bill. An attempt had been made by Government in 1876 to deal with this question, when Lord Sandon's Bill was discussed. That Bill proposed an improvement in the poor districts section of the Act of 1870, but the proposal was withdrawn because of difficulties connected with Voluntary Schools. It was a well-known fact that necessitous districts could not be picked out as far as Voluntary Schools were concerned, because some of the poorest Roman Catholic Schools were situated in the richest districts. He merely referred to this in order to show that in 1870, and again in 1876—in fact on every occasion, this question had been recognised as a pressing evil to be coped with, and they had had the promise of the late Government and the promise of the present Government, that it would be dealt with in the next Education Bill. Since last year there had been an aggravation of the case. There were a large number of small districts scattered all over Wales, which had within recent years, owing to their increasing poverty, become qualified to receive the small extra grant under Section 97 of the Act of 1870. Many of those districts had been unaware of the fact that they were entitled to assistance, and when they discovered it and applied for the money, the law officers held that they were not entitled to any money previously earned by them, and that they must start afresh.

The extent of this grievance was very great. The School Board rate in some districts against which he was certain extravagance could not be alleged—districts which came within the speech of the Vice President of the Council last year—had risen to over 3s. The Vice President himself last year picked out certain districts and distinctly admitted that no allegation of extravagance could be made against them. The position the right hon. Gentleman took up was that this was a crying case, that it must be dealt with by the House of Commons, and would be dealt with soon. A portion of the case was to be by itself in this Bill, and he asked hon. Members did they believe that if they parted with this Bill without a far more definite understanding than they now had, they would within the lifetime of the present Parliament see any attempt made to cope with the other portion of the question? 40 or 50 Members on the Conservative side represented necessitous School Board districts, and if they were content with the promise given them that night, they were very different from what he took some of them to be. No doubt stronger promises would be given, but he could see no reason, now that the absolute limit of time necessary for the passing of this Bill had been removed, why the two cases should not be dealt with together, seeing that the Government admitted that the two parts of the case were equally urgent. A suggestion had been made that the necessities of poor districts might possibly require very different modes of treatment. He ventured to assert that no system of dealing with them by an increase of area could meet the case. It could be met only on financial grounds. In his own constituency the area was enormous, and the rateable value was very low. In one parish it was very little more than £1 a head of the population, and, through the extraordinary Order of the Local Government Board under the Agricultural Rating Act, the small freeholders had been excluded from the benefits of that Act. There were districts in which the Voluntary Schools which would be assisted were hardly known to the population—where the Church had not been able to cope with the necessities of the districts, and where there was no Voluntary School system which could possibly take the place of the poor Board Schools. In his own district the Voluntary Schools which existed obtained virtually no subscriptions from the public, and that which was counted as a voluntary subscription was a gift from the Crown in another form. There was one case in which the grants from the Crown in one form and another were already as much as £418, while the subscriptions and sales of work, and income from all other sources were only £4. The fact was that such schools were out of sympathy with the feelings of the district. It was a Nonconformist district, and the public would not use and would not subscribe to the Voluntary Schools. To assist the Voluntary Schools where they no more than covered the ground as far as their own church population was concerned, and to refuse to assist the School Board rate, was to create a burning sense of injustice among the people. Of course he could understand the necessities of the Government with their own supporters. At the same time a great many of their supporters represented districts of the kind he had referred to, and they had recently been telling their friends that the Government intended to deal with their case. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had said that the Government intended to deal with it, but he confessed that he could not imagine that there was any dealing with their case in the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman that night. The right hon. Gentleman said that if their Bill slipped through quickly a further Bill would be introduced, but he gave nothing like an undertaking on which hon. Members could go to the people concerned and say that their case would be considered. The only opportunity hon. Members had of dealing with this part of the question was at this stage, and on the Second Reading. They were driven to object to this Resolution and to vote against it. There would undoubtedly be a rankling sense of injustice in the minds of those who inhabited poor School Board districts; yet where the rates were at an enormous height the Government were going to pick out and help Voluntary Schools, which were almost unknown to the population, and leave this injustice unredressed until a time which he believed would be outside the limits of the present Parliament.

MR. COURTNEY said that few positions were more perilous than that of the man who spoke on the First Reading of a Bill. He remembered well, when the Bill of 1870 was brought in, an hon. Member who made a speech in rapturous appreciation of Mr. Forster's proposal was very much twitted afterwards by a right hon. Member on his rashness in having done so. If it was rash to speak on a First Reading, it was still more rash to speak on a Resolution which was only preparatory; and if in these remarks he appeared to be condemning himself, he would point out that last year he showed no such indiscretion, for he did not open his mouth in the House at any stage of the Bill of last year, though it was true that he did write a letter to *The Times*, which was very much ridiculed at the time because he recommended that the Bill should be withdrawn. [*Opposition cheers.*] Why was he rash enough to speak on the subject now when he held back last year? But there had been a great change in the situation. He understood that the reason Parliament met some weeks earlier than usual was that something should be accomplished before the end of the financial year. [*Opposition cheers.*] He believed that impression was shared by the rest of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] In the course of the autumn a letter appeared in *The Times* from Sir C. Ryan, Comptroller and Auditor-General, pointing out that if the Bill were to be passed before the end of the financial year it was necessary it should be a simple one, and the money granted under it should be at once handed over to those who were entitled to receive it. Having that in mind, he himself was quite prepared to accept a Bill passed before March 31 restricted to the Voluntary Schools, because he thought it impossible to pass a more complex Bill within such a limited time. But now the effort to secure the money during the financial year had been abandoned, the position was entirely changed, and the ready acquiescence he was prepared to give the Bill under those circumstances he must now withhold. He approached the subject in no spirit of jealousy. He had come to recognise that they must pay deference to the wishes of parents where they were clearly expressed, and if they were followed it would be absolutely unjust to withhold public money from the school. Personally he was an upholder of unsectarian education. [*Opposition cheers.*] He should like to see Board Schools multiplied, but he had no right to impress his feeling on the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich or the parents of children in the country; and if they insisted upon having schools where their children could be sent and their faith safeguarded, our scheme of national education would have to be enlarged to take them in on equal terms. Therefore, although the Archbishops and Bishops at the Clergy House might have shown some ignorance of the conditions of Parliamentary life, he regarded their plan of action as a statesmanlike plan on the whole, and they were entitled to this meed of admiration—that what they proposed was absolutely just and equal to all parties. It was in the face of that confession that he approached the proposals of the Bill. The Archbishops and Bishops did not seem to realise how much the farmers and others in country districts hated the rates. Looking at the permanent forces at work in support of denominational schools, he was inclined to think that in the reasonable progress of time they would see, not perhaps the Government that now held office, but possibly the right hon. Member for West Monmouth introducing a scheme of rate-aided support of denominational schools. It was all very well to deride the Archbishops and Bishops for their ignorance of the conditions of Parliamentary life, but he was not sure that they were not miracles of political wisdom compared with the present Government —[*Opposition cheers and laughter*]— if they could see how the system proposed would work in the face of the conditions of political thought and life in the country. The scheme before the House was defensible only if accepted as a temporary measure and as a half measure. Had it been so restricted and the intention been to pass it before the end of the financial year, under some guarantee that there was to be further action hereafter, he should have supported it. But it came without such guarantees in its present naked deformity, and the House of Commons would find by contact with people out-of-doors that there were forces at work in the masses of the people which would be hostile to the permanence of such a settlement. [*Opposition cheers.*] In his constituency the parishioners in the moorlands would out of their poverty have to support their School Boards, while their richer neighbours over the border received assistance under this scheme. How could he go to such parishes and defend such a scheme? It was impossible. ["Hear, hear!"] If it were restricted under guarantees, he might have told them that it was only a temporary shift, necessary because of the House of Commons, which compelled certain things to be done by March 31, and other things would follow. They might say that many things were promised by the House of Commons, and what security had they that the task of completing the scheme would be undertaken by the present Government? The speech of the Minister who had introduced the scheme held out faint hope that during the time of the present Parliament anything further would be done to supplement the scheme. How should he defend the allocation which was to be made on the recommendation of committees at the discretion of the Education Department—a system which gave many parishes less than their neighbours? He strongly protested against any scheme which left the allocation of money more or less to the Education Department. Now, was the thing so hopeless that they were driven to vote against this Resolution? Could they not have a guarantee which would fix the Government to an engagement to complete the scheme? If so, hon. Members could go to their constituents and say this was only a partial Measure, and standing by itself it was unjust—[*Opposition laughter*]—but it necessarily came to an end in a limited time, and then they would find a complete programme fulfilled. The Bill proposed to authorise the expenditure of money in aid of Voluntary Schools. Why not insert the words "during the year ending March 31, 1898." If those words were inserted it would give the Government a whole year to see something of the working of this complex scheme, and if they gave the guarantee they had mentioned the Government would not be able to come next Session and say, "We are too busy to take up and complete the scheme." ["Hear, hear!"] Constituents were prone to be suspicious. If the Government would give some guarantee binding them next year at the latest to complete their plan, Members would not feel the same trepidation. But, if the subject was to remain as it had been introduced by the First Lord of the Treasury, the House, he thought, could not rest satisfied. It was for the Government to determine in what temper they should proceed, and he urged upon Ministers the necessity of doing something promptly, which would free some of their supporters from great embarrassment and themselves from some suspicion. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. C. A. CRIPPS (Gloucester, Stroud) cordially supported the proposals of the First Lord of the Treasury. He did so on the ground that matters of this kind should be regarded from the point of view of the interests of our educational system. The test was this—Were the proposals of the Government likely to inure to the benefit of the whole educational system of this country? If that test were applied, he thought it would be found that the proposals of the Government were such as would certainly be for the benefit of our educational system, as including both Board Schools and Voluntary or Denominational Schools. The right hon. Member for Rotherham had gone into the question of breach of promise, as he called it, and had attempted to show that as between various towns or boroughs the scheme of the Government might act inequitably and unfairly. But neither of these censures really went to the root of these proposals. What they had to consider was not whether certain Members had made certain promises in the past with regard to our educational system. They were not to be guided by the rival interests of Members representing town or country districts. They had to take a wider view, and to ask themselves whether these proposals were likely to improve the educational system of the country. In his opinion, the Government, by limiting their proposals for this Session within the smallest possible scope, had adopted the best means to initiate a reform which, in its ultimate results, would certainly benefit both the Voluntary Schools and the necessitous Board Schools. A Measure like this was undoubtedly necessary as a temporary palliative, but there was no doubt that in the final settlement of this education question, every school in the country must be treated in the same way, whether Voluntary or necessitous Board Schools, whether denominational or undenominational. But at the present time the pinch was felt in connection with the support of our Voluntary Schools, and it was good statesmanship to introduce a Measure which dealt in the first place with the immediate difficulty, with that which was known as the intolerable strain affecting the denominational and Voluntary Schools of this country. He admitted that hon. Members opposite could always bring to bear criticism of the following kind. If the scheme was too large then the Government could be taunted with the impossibility of carrying it within the limited time at their disposal; if, on the other hand, the scheme was limited in scope, the suggestion could be made that it ought not to pass because, forsooth, it did not deal with other matters of great complexity. He agreed most fully with what had been said by the First Lord of the Treasury, that one could not regard the educational system of this country from a merely theoretical and abstract point of view. One must consider it historically, and in connection with what had been done in the past, particularly since the Act of 1870. He did not believe that the country at large were ripe for such a revolution in our educational system as would upset or put on one side the settlement of 1870. He held that the settlement of 1870 ought to be supported, because that settlement, as explained by its great author, the late Mr. Forster, was intended to preserve denominational and undenominational schools side by side, so that the friends of each system might be satisfied. In connection with that settlement it was very essential to consider the question of local management. The distinction drawn in that matter by the Act of 1870 was rightly drawn, and had worked admirably. So far as State aid was given —and a large measure of State aid had been given ever since 1870—Parliament was satisfied that the funds were provided and used for the proper service of education by the system of inspection under the Central Department in Whitehall. And if on the present occasion the proposal was merely to give an increased measure of the aid to the Voluntary Schools, there was no ground for upsetting the settlement of the Act of 1870, or introducing any Measure of local management at all. The principle adopted in 1870 ought to be carefully preserved, there being no reason why they should rely on local control instead of on the control of the central management, exercised through the inspectors sent down from Whitehall. Where Parliament granted money it had a right to exercise control in order to make sure that that money was rightly expended. Where money was given by the State the State must see that that money was properly expended under a proper system of inspection. But where money was provided out of rates, and where as incidental to that there was local control—where assistance was given to our Voluntary Schools out of the rates—full control in respect of that expenditure ought to be given to the ratepayers. One of the reasons why he supported the proposal of the Government was that it was a proposal based on the principle of State aid, and that if they applied that principle to our Voluntary Schools they must apply it also hereafter to the necessitous Board Schools. When they should have developed the whole system they must give the same measure of State aid to all schools. In order to bring about ultimately a great reform of that kind it was a wise policy to introduce it in compartments, and to take the first step where the necessity was greatest, and our Voluntary and Denominational Schools were those which now needed help most. Why was it that the Voluntary and Denominational Schools wanted some additional and special aid? This point, he thought, was only half understood. There were three causes which were operating and making it necessary to relieve the Denominational or Voluntary Schools. They had in the first place to consider that the expense of education in this country, whether in Board Schools or Voluntary districts, had been very largely increased by the requirements of Parliament—he meant the code requirements which were framed by the Education Department, and which were laid upon the table of the House. If Parliament required a larger expenditure on our national primary education, Parliament, in the first place, ought to find the necessary funds and means. That was the principle which they were recognising that night. Voluntary Schools had suffered because Parliament had demanded that the expenditure on primary education should be largely increased. The House was merely recognising in this Measure what was in itself a Measure of Justice—namely, that Parliament, which had imposed this expenditure, should find the money in connection with the primary education of their Voluntary Schools. The second cause had been referred to—that of free education. He felt strongly that there was a special case as regarded Voluntary Schools in connection with some of the large towns, and particularly the large towns of Lancashire. The effect of free education, or the measures connected with it, had been different in different parts of the country, and whereas in many of their country districts free education operated so as to relieve the pressure on Voluntary Schools, on the other hand, in the larger towns, particularly in the Manchester district, the measure of relief given by Parliament had been nothing like sufficient to make up the deficiency from the absence of school payments. It was therefore only fair, right, and just that there should be some system of discrimination by which, if they looked to the reality of things, the Voluntary Schools in the various districts should be helped somewhat in the same manner. Something had been said as to what had been called the competition of the School Board in the School Board districts. He did not speak with any feeling of hostility to the School Board system in this country; on the contrary, he believed that it was as necessary to have a School Board system as to preserve the Voluntary and Denominational system; but he thought that this question of competition had been somewhat misunderstood. He did not object to a fair competition, but to a competition levelled at supplanting a rival. He did not think that what the Boards had done was to be laid at the door of the School Boards. He thought the fault was due to Parliament, because it had hitherto refused to draw a right limitation as between primary and secondary education. How could Parliament expect that these School Boards should know the limits of their power without some guidance was given to them by Parliament itself? If they were to lay down the true limitation between primary and secondary education, to bring forward a system of secondary education and keep within its due limits the system of primary education, then this so-called competition would not exist, or at any rate it would be a fair and proper one. He thought, therefore, that the Government had started from the proper point because it had recognised that assistance in connection with our national education should be given from the National Exchequer. It had recognised that this was an Imperial or National matter rather than a local one. It might be true, as had been urged by the right hon. Member for Bodmin, that in future the rates may be spread over a larger quantity of property than at present; but what can be more unjust at present than to throw the cost of our national primary education on a portion which represented about a half of the property of the country? If, however, the expense of education were thrown on the Exchequer, it was fairly spread over all the property of the country; if they threw additional expenditure on the rates it was borne by a portion only of the property in the country, and borne in such a way that the poorest districts must always suffer most. He hoped that consideration would be borne in mind in dealing with the present proposal, because if the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, for example, desired that the Measure should be extended to necessitous schools, then the right hon. Gentleman must support the present proposal of the Government, because by no other means could relief be given. In any educational reform they ought to take care that the poorer districts were treated as well as the richer districts. He admitted that at the present time it was almost impossible to deal with the question of discrimination in distributing the 5s. grant as between the Voluntary Schools in the country; but he thought the principle was right. He thought that assistance ought to be given where it was most wanted. He hoped that when the House came to consider these Resolutions later it would be acknowledged that this at any rate was the first necessary step. It might also realise that if a larger Measure had been introduced it would only have been brought in with the liability of failure attached to it. The First Lord of the Treasury had introduced a Measure which was just, right, and equitable as far as it went. It was founded on the true basis upon which further Measures ought to be introduced, whether they referred to necessitous Board Schools or to all the Board Schools in the various districts of the country.

MR. CHARLES MORLEY (Brecknock) said that the proposals of the Government should be met with resolute opposition. What was the real object of the Government? They were proposing to make a grant of public money to a particular class of schools—for what object? Were they anxious merely to promote efficiency of education, or did they seek to increase and extend the teaching of theological and ecclesiastical dogma in our public Elementary Schools? If their object was the first it would be easy for them to insert some provision by which it would be made clear that this money was to be applied, not in saving the sensitive pockets of clerical supporters of Church Schools, but in promoting the efficiency of education which those schools provided. The House had been told that Voluntary Schools were in danger of extinction; was that the real opinion of the Government? He believed it was not the opinion of many of them. In the *Nineteenth Century* of November last, the Vice President of the Council stated that in the country districts, at all events, the Voluntary Schools, were in no danger of extinction. The Colonial Secretary last May stated that the right principle was to keep the Voluntary Schools on their legs. It appeared that one reason why the right hon. Gentleman had changed his mind and no longer wished to extinguish Voluntary Schools was that he found they could not be extinguished. But if that was so, why did the right hon. Gentleman say, in the course of the same speech, that the Voluntary Schools were being extinguished by unfair competition? The right hon. Gentleman talked about "rooting up" the system of Voluntary Schools. No doubt there was a good Radical ring about the expression which reminded one of other days; but who proposed to root up the Voluntary School system? No one, he believed. It was quite time the country recognised who in this matter were the attacking party and who attacked. It was the Board School system which was being attacked, and not the Voluntary Schools, and it was the present Government who were making the attack. They were now proposing a fresh departure from the settlement of 1870, which laid down equality of treatment for all classes of schools alike. The Leader of the House had acknowledged the enormous pressure to which ratepayers of places like Romford and Walthamstow and West Ham were subjected, but the result of the proposals before the Committee would be that the districts named would have to support their own schools at great sacrifice to themselves, and would be compelled to contribute to other schools where there was no School Board rate at all. He represented a county of which the large proportion of population were Nonconformists, and the amount of injustice which they now suffered would be largely increased if these proposals were carried out. Nonconformists were excluded not only from the management, but also from the teaching staff of more than half of the public Elementary Schools of the country. In many places children of Nonconformists were being compulsorily educated in Church Schools. In other words, parents were forced to forego what Lord Salisbury had referred to as an inalienable right—the right of the parent to have his child taught his own religion. Another hardship in connection with this allocation of public money was that while the money was drawn from taxpayers of all shades of religious opinion, it was to be given to schools which, while public in name, were under private management, and which were retained for the most part for the propagation of dogmas of one Church only. He contended that there was no justice in the proposals of the Government, and was certain they would not carry with them the approval of the country in general. It was the earnest desire of many hon. Members on both sides of the House to retain religious instruction in our Public Elementary Schools; but he warned the Committee that if the proposals of the Government were carried, it would inevitably tend to hasten the day when religious instruction would no longer be regarded as one of the duties of the State as Schoolmaster.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.), as one of the malcontents last year, the only one on the Ministerial side except the Member for South-West Ham who voted against the Bill, wished to say that he believed the majority of his constituents would gratefully accept the proposals of the First Lord of the Treasury, and he should support the Bill. He was glad the Government had not included in the Measure the proposal made last year of raising the age of compulsory attendance of agricultural labourers' children from 11 to 12. He was glad also they had decided not to be seduced by the Church Committee or the Convocation of Bishops sitting at the Church House in Dean's-yard into giving rate aid to Voluntary Schools. If the Government had not dropped that idea, the agricultural districts would have dropped them at the next General Election. [*Opposition cheers.*] He thought, however, the teachers ought to have got something in the shape of security of tenure. The money to be voted should be, to a certain extent, earmarked both for apparatus and for extra pay to the teachers. [*Opposition cheers.*] He had a resolution in his pocket from an important body of his constituents, in which they objected to relief not being given to Board Schools and Voluntary Schools alike. He held that the money should be paid to both alike, and should come out of one Imperial fund. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House promised, indeed, a supplementary Bill "if time permits." It lay entirely with the Government to say whether time should permit or not. If the Government would only limit the exuberant rhetoric of hon. Gentlemen on both sides—[*laughter*]—there would be ample time, and so everybody would be satisfied.

*MR. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said he was not surprised that the hon. Member had received a resolution from his constituents disapproving of these proposals. Before long Members who represented Nonconformist constituencies would have so many of these resolutions that they would have to increase the size of their pockets to hold them all. The Bill would meet with resolute opposition from Nonconformists all over the country. They were deeply dissatisfied with the working of the Act of 1870, which was framed in the interests of the Voluntary Schools and operated most unjustly against Nonconformists. That effect had been anticipated. Mr. Bright protested against that Act, which he said encouraged denominational education and only established Board Schools where such education was impossible. In 1872 the right hon. Member for West Birmingham said that the Act was

> "bad in principle, made worse in practice, and remained a monument of the ingratitude of a Liberal Government and an intolerable injustice to Nonconformists."

There was a significant passage in the life of Mr. W. E. Forster bearing on the unacceptability of the Act of 1870 to Nonconformists. Mr. Forster had protested against some concessions in the interests of Voluntary Schools and against those of the Dissenters, and Lord Ripon wrote to him:—

> "Your business and mine is simply to try and get the Bill through. If Gladstone prefers to carry it with the aid of the Tories rather than by conciliating the bulk of Liberal opinion that is his affair, and not ours, and we must let him do what he likes."

Great changes had taken place since 1870. Then there were only 6,000 Church Schools; now there were 12,000. That extension of the voluntary system was foreseen by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who in 1872 said,

> "No School Boards could be established under the Act in those parishes, and Dissenters must accept in the education of their children such protection as the conscience clause afforded."

There were districts in this country with a population of no less than 9,000,000, where parents had no choice of schools at all. Dissenters must send their children to the Anglican Schools, conducted under the management of the parsons. It was said that the Voluntary Schools were popular. In 40 towns situated in 26 different counties, the Church Schools six years ago educated 21,387 children, while the Board Schools educated 27,706. These were towns where there was only a Board and a Church school side by side. To-day the figures were 21,934 for the Voluntary Schools, and 40,872 in the

Board Schools. That showed the result where the parents had a choice. The Bishops did not believe that the schools were so popular, because one of the main arguments used by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Convocation in November last against rate aid was that it would bring with it popular control. A year ago the Secretary for the Colonies justified his changed attitude by saying that the Voluntary Schools had seized hold upon the popular imagination. What they were attempting to do was to seize hold upon the popular purse. Another great change which had come over them was that they were no longer Voluntary in the same degree as they were 25 years ago. The total cost of the Anglican Schools was £3,600,000; but the Voluntary subscriptions were only £640,000. That proportion was not large enough to justify resistance to popular control. To-night, as with the Bill of last year, Member after Member had said that he was in favour of the Bill while objecting to details. One of the great grievances of Nonconformists was that while out of 1,800,000 children in the Church Schools, 750,000, at least, were Nonconformists; the parents of those children had no voice in the management of the schools, and their children were excluded from the teaching profession. Yet the House was asked to vote this additional money to sectarian schools, without any guarantee for the protection of the Nonconformist children. In some towns there were none but sectarian schools; and as long as any denomination offered to supply deficiencies, it was impossible to erect a Board School. Next to the Church of England the largest religious community was the Wesleyan Methodist body; and they had completely turned round within the last few years in regard to their education policy. In 1870, when the Board School system was established they were unfortunately sitting on the fence. They supported a system of maintaining School Boards alongside of Voluntary Schools. But they had entirely departed from that attitude; and the strongest resolutions against the policy of the Government had come from that Church which used to be considered somewhat Conservative. The Committee had been told that this increased grant would be distributed from headquarters but with the advice of local associations, which, of course, would be clerical assemblies. The Government were undoubtedly to be congratulated on having rejected some of the most vehemently worded resolutions of the Church Conference last November; but their adoption of this system of federated associations showed that they had not completely shaken off their clerical advisers. He should like to know whether the extra grant was to be given to schools which were not free schools, and so be used for bolstering up those numerous schools in which free education was not given. They could not forget that the Prime Minister had said that a vigorous effort must be made to capture the Board Schools in the interest of the Church of England; and as this Measure was obviously intended to strengthen that Church in the rural districts, as it had been shaped largely by the clerical supporters of the Government, and as it made no attempt to remedy the grievances under which School Boards in necessitous districts laboured, he trusted that the House—supported by the Nonconformists, by all lovers of the School Board system of education, and he would add by every lover of fair play—would earnestly and resolutely oppose the Measure. [*Cheers.*]

On the return of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, after the usual interval,

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that as one who had been a strong advocate of Voluntary or denominational Schools he acknowledged that the grant of £616,500 towards the maintenance of those schools would be of immense benefit to them at the present time when he knew that they were in a position of great financial difficulty. No one could doubt that the grant would be a very great advantage to them in a pecuniary sense. As far as this Bill went hon. Members must be satisfied that a great effort had been made on the part of the Government to place these schools upon a more sound financial basis than they had hitherto occupied. It was necessary, however, to look a little deeper into the matter than the mere pecuniary advantage which these schools would obtain under the Bill. They were bound to consider not only the immediate benefit to the schools which would flow from this Bill, but whether this large grant would afford a real solution of the problem before them, and whether it would place denominational schools upon a permanent financial basis. He should like hon. Members to look at this question from one or two aspects. In the first place would this grant place the Voluntary Schools upon an equal footing with the Board Schools. He thought that that was a very reasonable question to be asked. The relative cost of the maintenance of the two classes of schools had been gone into very fairly in the Report of the Education Department. He would not trouble the House with the details but this Report showed clearly that the cost of maintenance of the Board Schools was £2 10s. 2d. per head while that of the Voluntary Schools was only £1 18s. 11½d. per head. Even adding this large sum of 5s. per head to be given by the grant the cost of maintenance of the Voluntary Schools would be far less than that of the Board Schools. Therefore, even this large grant would not place the Voluntary Schools and the Board Schools upon an equal financial footing in the country districts, while the discrepancy between them would be far larger in London. The second question he desired to ask was whether this grant would put a stop to the rivalry in expenditure that now existed between the Board and the Voluntary Schools? It was well known that for many years there had been a sort of rivalry in expenditure going on between the two sets of schools. He did not say that that rivalry was altogether an evil because it tended to make the schools better and more efficient, but there could be no doubt that this expenditure was being continually increased. Would the proposal to give 5s. per head tend to decrease or increase this competition? In his opinion it would have a very strong tendency to egg on the expenditure of Board Schools, who would feel for the moment they were placed in a somewhat unfair position, and not at all contribute to a sounder system of education or destroy the rivalry between the two sets of schools. The increase in the rates per scholar last year was 1s. 4d. If that rate of increase only went on for three or four years, this large grant would soon be absorbed. There was, therefore, not much of a permanent character about this legislation. There was a third point worthy of consideration—Would this proposal tend to educational peace or educational war? To his mind one of the great essential characteristics of the successful promotion of education was that it should go on peaceably and with as little as possible Debate in this House, and above all things it should be kept as far as possible from the turmoil of political controversy and strife. He asked any hon. Gentleman whether the proposal was likely to tend to peace and harmony in educational matters. He could not help thinking that the proposal would give the opponents of the Government a very good rallying cry. [*Opposition cheers.*] It seemed to him it would tend in every possible way to foment in each district an agitation which before long would become very serious; the Government were in fact giving their opponents a very useful political cry. He could not for a moment suppose that the suggestion as to the association of schools would last even through the Committee stage. [*Renewed Opposition cheers.*] If the Education Department had to decide between the rival claims of different districts and schools as to whether the one or the other should have 3s., 4s., 5s., 6s., or what not, they would lay themselves open to abuse and to every possible suggestion of corruption. The Department would be put in an unfair position, and in his judgment such a system as that would not be tolerated long. He regretted he had had to make these remarks, because he thought that at the present time they had a grand opportunity. They had a large majority, and they had a mandate from the country to support the Voluntary Schools, and to permanently settle this great question. That it must be permanently settled was obvious. The Leader of the House suggested that there would be another Bill. No one, however, who had any knowledge of the working of the House would conceive it possible to have two Educational Bills in one Session. They must consider this Bill, good or bad, as the work of this Parliament. It was possible a Technical or a Secondary Education Bill on a smaller scale might be dangled before them, but still it was impossible to get this Measure through the House sufficiently early to enable them to take up another Bill dealing with the same subject. It appeared to him there was a simple solution of this great question. Everything was greatly cheaper since 1870. Since then they had made education compulsory and free, and he asked why could not the State fix the standard of secular education it required in all children and then fix the cost, to be varied, of course by Parliament from time to time? Parliament would pay the cost to Board and Voluntary Schools alike, leaving the management, cost of buildings, equipment, and religious teaching to the School Board in School Board districts and to Voluntary Schools in Voluntary School districts. That solution would have all the advantage of permanency, and there would not be rivalry between the two sets of schools, except friendly rivalry to do the best they could for each section of the community. The cost would be very little greater under such a system than under the present one. The First Lord proposed to grant £616,000. The poor Board Schools had a greater claim, which would be pressed very strongly upon the House. They would require £100,000, if not more; and he calculated that if the whole cost of secular teaching were put down at 35s. per head—and that would be a liberal allowance—the additional cost to supplement the present vote in the Estimates would be covered by just a million sterling. That was only, after all, £200,000 or £300,000, the cost of a gunboat, in addition to what we were now spending and proposing to spend. No one could say he had not always advocated the cause of elementary and other education. Though not in the House at the time he had much to do with the Education Act of 1870, and he would be the last to suggest that the working of that beneficent Measure should be at all damaged. He had, however, always held that denominational schools were essential, for in his judgment education without doctrinal religion was of little value. He knew it was often considered pretty much like treason to venture to differ from those who were supposed to lead them. If *The Times* condescended to notice his remarks it would possibly attribute to him, as it did

to the hon. Member for Cardiff in respect to the South Africa Committee, personal motives in making these remarks. He had no such motives. During the many years he had been interested in social and educational questions he had been a great believer in a sound and popular system of education. He wished to see those who preferred a non-denominational system have what they desired just as he would provide a denominational system of education for those who wished to have it. They were bound to promote any national system that would advance those interests. In his judgment, to put anything in this Bill which would suggest unfairness to any one particular class of schools would tend to sectarian rivalry and to retard the progress of sound education. ["Hear, hear!"] He believed that even in this Bill, short as it was, the Government might have dealt with the question on a larger basis, having regard to the cost of secular education as a whole, and he repeated that from this point of view he thought the problem might have been solved. But he feared that the scheme set forth, though by it certain schools which badly wanted help would be assisted, would give an idea of unfairness in regard to other schools; that it would set up a spirit of rivalry and antagonism, and that the Measure to be introduced would not tend ultimately to the firmer foundation of the Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*]

*Mr. ALBERT SPICER (Monmouth Boroughs) said he heartily concurred in the concluding remarks of the previous speaker. He thought the Government had made a great mistake in dealing with this matter from the narrow standpoint they had taken up, especially because, representing as they did, all shades of ecclesiastical opinion, they had peculiar advantages in dealing with it, and an opportunity of recognising what was fair and just to each section. The Measure, however, was drafted in a way which was most unfair and unjust to all free Churchmen. ["Hear, hear!"] In the Debate of last Session the Nonconformists, or political Nonconformists, as they were termed, were twitted by a noble Lord on the front Bench with having prevented, through their intolerance, a solution of this question. That was not true. The name "Political Nonconformists" was simply used, they knew, as a term of opprobrium, but after all Political Nonconformists were simply Nonconformists who were really in earnest and believed implicitly in their principles. ["Hear, hear!"] At any rate, they had a right to fair treatment in this matter. Free Churchmen, and he spoke as one, had shown their interest in the work of definite religious education, and it was proved by this fact that to-day they had a larger number of scholars and teachers in their Sunday schools than the Church of England. Free Churchmen were not responsible for the present difficulty. It had even been said that the existing School Board system of education was conducted in harmony with the ideas and wishes of the Nonconformists. He denied that free Churchmen had anything to do with that settlement. The Cowper-Temple Clause, which gave the undenominational character to the Act of 1870, was not of their creation. At that time, as had already been said that evening, the Nonconformists were divided on the question; the great Wesleyan body were in favour of denominational education, while the Congregationalists, the Baptists, and other bodies openly advocated that the State should take care of secular education, and that all the Churches should look after religious education. That was the attitude assumed, but directly after the Act was passed the London School Board was established, and they agreed that there should be Bible teaching in their schools. Well, that course caught the idea of the country, and the School Boards, with only a few exceptions, followed it. That system, therefore, was not created by the Nonconformists; it was adopted because it met the common sense views of the great mass of those who had to do with the Board Schools. The Nonconformists had, indeed, directly suffered by the system. For what was the result of it after 25 years experience? Why, that at the present time there were 8,000 parishes in England in which the only schools were those connected with the Established Church. The direct effect of this was that in any of those parishes where there was an intolerant Clergyman, or where strong Church views were held, the Nonconformist children attending them—there was no other school available for them—were under a certain stigma. [*Cheers, and Ministerial cries of* "No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite exclaimed "No," but he knew that it was so in many cases. It might be said that the people who suffered under this state of things should make their complaints known; but it must be borne in mind that most of the Nonconformists in such parishes were in the employment of the leading Churchmen in the district, and thus could not complain or seek protection under the Conscience Clause without making themselves obnoxious. He contended that it was grossly unfair to place Nonconformists in that position, which they had endured in those 8,000 parishes for 25 years. ["Hear, hear!"] A second glaring injustice was that, while only one-sixth of the cost of the so-called Voluntary or Church of England Schools was borne by subscriptions and endowments, the other five-sixths were borne by the State, and yet the whole management of the schools was in the hands of one party. ["Hear, hear!"] No fair-minded man could say that that was a right state of things. A third great injustice to Nonconformists was that in the parishes to which he had referred, not a single Nonconformist young man or woman was permitted to enter the educational profession. ["Hear, hear!"] There were many bright young men and women in those parishes—some of them the sons and daughters of Nonconformist Ministers—who would be glad to enter the profession, and who would willingly and loyally serve the schools, subject to a Conscience Clause, but they were told that their services were not required unless they gave up their Nonconformity. ["Hear, hear," *and Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"] That was no less an injury to education in those districts than to the Nonconformists. It was said that they must have definite religious teaching. He had had some experience of School Boards; he had served on one Board for 15 years; and on that Board the Nonconformists and the Liberals were always in a minority, yet they worked harmoniously. All the Voluntary Schools in that district were handed over to the Board by the managers. The Board enlarged the schools at the ratepayers' expense, and gave the Churchmen the right of using them twice a week and on Sundays. Moreover, the Board gave them the use of all the new appliances for their own special work, and he ventured to say that there were not ten men then in that district who would desire to go back to the old system. Yet this was a district, which, having adopted a fair and reasonable system through their representatives, would get nothing under this Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] That was in itself an evidence of the injustice of the course the Government adopted, for the effect of the proposal would be to punish those who had determined to work loyally together in the cause of national education. ["Hear, hear!"] And he believed that in the general experience concerning this particular district was really to be found the solution of the difficulty before them. It was said that if they had those schools everywhere controlled, where State-aided by popular representation, they would incur enormous expense. But let them bear in mind that this would only be the case if all the existing Voluntary Schools were shut up. If they could only arrange some fair way by which they should be transferred to popularly elected bodies, all these questions would instantly pass away. But it was said that they must have definite religious education. How were they to get it? They must bear in mind in the first place that teachers to Board Schools and to Voluntary Schools were today provided very largely from the same source. The Church Party had in their hands the great majority of the training institutions for the teachers, and any of them who had sat on boards knew perfectly well that they selected quite as many teachers from the Church training institutions as they did from those that were undenominational. He believed the percentage of Church training institutions to that of undenominational were something like 80 per cent. After all, what did this definite religious education depend upon? It depended upon those who are, after all, in responsible charge of the school. If those in charge, whether in Voluntary Schools or in Board Schools, were in sympathy with definite religious education, the teachers selected would also be religious men, and would be men who would be in sympathy with definite religious instruction. At the present time he did not believe there was any more definite religious education in Church Schools than there was in the great mass of Board Schools. It was not every clergyman who conducted the religious education. He was told that in the great mass of schools their so-called doctrinal education, meaning the Church catechism, was only taught once a week, and that the rest of the week it was simply Bible teaching, similar to that conducted in Board Schools. It seemed to him so much cant was talked on this matter by the so-called upholders of the Voluntary Schools, who were contradicting in their own lives and in the education they themselves were giving their children what they claimed there. They took the high schools, and secondary schools which had the system of undenominational education, and yet they were always crying out for their so-called definite doctrinal education in the education of those they could help to control. Let them look at this matter honestly. There were just as many on that side of the House interested in definite religious education as on the other side, and they would not have the Members of the Government Party claiming that they on the Opposition side were against such education. Let them have religious education established in conformity with the wishes of the people as a whole. It seemed to him that this proposal of the Government was not only unfair and unjust to the Free Churchmen, but it was peculiarly unfair and unjust to those who had shown the greatest interest in the cause of education. After all, two-thirds of the nation at the present time lived in Board School Districts. [HON. MEMBERS: "No; four-sevenths!"] He was speaking of the population. The people who would pay this new bill were the general taxpayers, and the general population who were in Board Schools were two-thirds, or 19,700,000, and one-third, or 9,200,000, were in Voluntary Schools. So that the very districts who would not rate themselves were to be helped by being allowed a gift, of which a large proportion would be paid by those who already paid a heavy share. He ventured to predict that there was no question that had been brought before this country that was so likely to reunite the Free Churchmen who had been separated by Home Rule as the one which had been introduced that evening by the First Lord of the Treasury. He should give his earnest opposition to the Resolution.

MR. GEORGE DIXON (Birmingham, Edgbaston) said he had noticed that the greatest objection that had been put forward to the Resolution was its injustice and unfairness to the poor Board Schools in the country districts. With all that had been said on that subject he entirely sympathised. [*Opposition cheers.*] Their case was one of the most unexpected and extraordinary injustice. [*Opposition cheers.*] He rose now for the purpose of placing before the Committee the case of the School Boards in the large towns, which had been scarcely referred to. The injustice and the unfairness there, in some respects, were equally great, and he wished to point out what were the real facts of the case. In the 6,000 or 8,000 rural districts where there were no Board Schools at all, what had been the history of their difficulties since the Act of 1870 was passed? By that Act they were authorised to form a Board School, and, having done that, they then had the power to levy a rate over the district which would be sufficient to provide all that was necessary for the efficient carrying on of their schools. But what did they do? They refused to form these School Boards and to levy this rate, and they refused because, he would not say entirely, but in a very large number of these villages mainly, they would not suffer the loss consequent on that rate. They had gone on all these years under those conditions. The Government had largely increased—nay, doubled—their grant, and, as they had been told very properly that night, the introduction of free education added considerably to their revenue. Therefore, financially, their position had been continually improving. ["Hear, hear!"] What did they hear now, within the last two years especially, since the Unionist Government had had a majority of 150? [*Opposition cheers.*] They had heard that these schools were in a state of financial decrepitude so alarming that unless something was immediately done they would find that they would be closed and that an enormous expense consequent thereon would be thrown on the rates. [*Cheers.*] He sympathised with those Gentlemen who said that would not be the case. In his opinion it was only the assertion of people who were entirely ignorant of the case. [*Opposition cheers.*] Let him draw the attention of the Committee to the state of the large towns. He would take the one he lived in, and of the School Board of which he had been a member since the commencement. What had they done? Of course they were compelled to provide sufficient accommodation for all those children who could not find accommodation in the existing schools. They had no choice. They had rated Birmingham to the extent of 46s. per scholar in their schools. They paid now—the last rate was—£115,000. Why did they do that? Because, in the first place, they were compelled to erect additional schools, and, in the second place, because they felt it was their duty to give to these children an education that would be efficient and that would gain the end the country had in view in the passing of the Act of 1870. They were told they had been competing with the denominational schools, as some people said to his utter astonishment, for the purpose of killing the denominational schools. That was utterly and entirely untrue. [*Opposition cheers.*] Such a thing had never yet entered into the mind of one single member of the Birmingham School Board, and he did not believe it had ever entered into the mind of any member of a School Board in any other part of the country. When the School Board was formed more than 20 years ago there was an average attendance of between 16,000 and 17,000 children in Voluntary Schools, and instead of these schools having been injured the average attendance in Voluntary Schools was 25,000. ["Hear, hear!"] Knowing as he did everything that had been done by the Birmingham Board, he did not hesitate to say, in the strongest possible manner, that the Board had never done anything that had been to the injury of a single denominational school and had always been on the most friendly terms with managers of those schools. What did this proposal mean? In some 6,000 or 8,000 agricultural parishes the population had continually refused to rate themselves and improve the education given in their schools, whereas in Birmingham they had spent no less than 46s. a head for the elementary education of their children. Under such circumstances the proposal was made to give this large grant of 5s. a head to those 6,000 or 8,000 parishes in country districts who had refused to rate themselves to the extent of a penny. [*Opposition cheers.*] When it was said that opposition to that proposal came from enemies of Voluntary Schools who wished them to be wiped out he utterly and entirely denied that. ["Hear!"] He would not vote against an additional grant of 5s. to those schools under the circumstances in which they were placed, but such a grant must be accompanied by an equal grant to large town School Boards. ["Hear, hear!"] It would be utterly unfair to confine the grant on the plea of their destitute condition to those who had refused to rate themselves and ignore those who had rated themselves heavily in the cause of education. It was said that the real cause of the difficulty was the unfair competition between Voluntary and Board Schools, the latter having the bottomless pocket of the ratepayers at command and spending so much money on their schools that the Voluntary Schools were injured. His answer to that, in the first place, was—Suppose this 5s. grant made, what would be the result? Would this grant prevent to any extent the competition complained of? Not at all; that competition would go on precisely as before. ["Hear, hear!"] That which was said to be injurious to Voluntary Schools, though he did not admit it, would still continue. In giving this grant, and refusing it to School Boards, Voluntary Schools would not be benefited so far as this so-called competition was concerned. He denied that if the grant were extended to School Boards it would be wasted. In a large number of cases—he was sure it would be so in Birmingham—the grant would go to relieve the school rate. No more than now would there be any disposition to use the money recklessly. Whatever a School Board did was done with the knowledge and consent of the ratepayers. To say to ratepayers that they should not spend the money in a way they might think proper, having regard to the education of the children in their area, was not an attitude that should be assumed towards a self-governing community. There was no case whatever for denying to School Boards this additional grant. If this principle were violated it would amount to a repeal of the most important principles of the Act of 1870, which directed that grants should be equal to all schools, and throughout all the great towns of England there would be a strong sense of resentment against the unfairness and injustice. ["Hear, hear!"] This feeling would grow year by year, and would become so strong that neither the Government that made the proposal nor Voluntary Schools would in the end gain by the arrangement, and it must be recognised as a very great mistake. ["Hear, hear!"] The grant, if made, should be made to all schools. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) hoped the Committee would permit him to speak a few words on this subject, because of the interest he had always taken in educational matters. In successive years, in conference and co-operation with others, he had introduced Bills to remove or mitigate the severity of the 17s. 6d. limit and for the relief of the rating of Voluntary Schools, and he felt that he should fail in his duty if he did not thank the Government for the proposal made. He did not intend to traverse the wide field which had been entered upon by Members who had preceded him. He concurred in the feeling expressed that injury was caused to the cause of education by mixing it up with political turmoil. Friends of education should work in harmony for the attainment of the one great end—the educational welfare of the country. As regarded what had been said by the hon. Member opposite with reference to the difficulties and hardships felt by Nonconformists, he would remark that many members of the Church of England appreciated those difficulties, and would rejoice if means could be devised for remedying them. He would remind the hon. Gentleman that there were Roman Catholics as well as Protestant Nonconformists in this country, whose interests must be borne in mind, and representing a borough which contained a large Irish Roman Catholic population, he should not be performing his duty towards them if he were to allow them to be ignored in that discussion. Turning to the main points of the Bill, he agreed with the First Lord of the Treasury that the chargeability of Voluntary Schools to rates was unequal and uncertain. There were some schools with which he was intimately acquainted where the whole question of continuing or discontinuing them depended upon the pressure or the absence of pressure on the part of the rating authorities, and there would be a sense of relief to Voluntary Schools if the law were thus changed. The principle of exemption now applied to many institutions ought in fairness and justice to be extended to the Voluntary Schools. As representing a town where there were large schools situated among the poor population, he must express his great satisfaction that the 17s. 6d. limit was to be entirely abolished. There were schools in Wigan which, to use the terms of the managers, were heavily fined. He knew of two Roman Catholic schools which were fined £50 and £60 a year, and there were schools belonging to the Church of England which were subjected to the same infliction. This charge was not only a heavy financial burden, but it also acted prejudicially to the cause of education, as it prevented managers extending the curriculum and giving a higher and better education. As to the increase of grant, he would remind the Committee of the increase in cost, owing to the action of the Government and the requirements of the Code. In the case of elementary schools, it had risen from £1 7s. 5d. in 1872 to £1 18s. 11¼d. in 1895; while in the case of Board Schools the change was even more remarkable, the cost having risen from £1 8s. 4½d. to £2 10s. 1¾d. But the friends of Voluntary Schools had not been inactive. They had increased their contributions. Taking the Voluntary Schools as a whole, there had been a growth of voluntary contributions from 6s. 6¼d. in 1894 to 6s. 9d. in 1895—a large sum when they were dealing with millions of children. He did not desire that there should be any diminution in their contributions, and was perfectly sure that Voluntary Schools could not continue to exist and have the support of the House of Commons unless the managers were willing to make liberal and growing contributions in support of their schools. As regarded the question of association, he had for many years desired such a system. At present each Voluntary School was isolated, but the Board Schools were grouped together, and he did not himself think that the Voluntary Schools could ever compete with the Board Schools on fair terms except they were brought together under some system of union and association. That system would give them mutual aid and facilities for consultation, and would give that flow of promotion from one school to another which now existed in Board Schools, and which would give life and energy to many of their schools in the large towns. He knew the feeling of hardship which existed among the friends of Voluntary Schools that they should receive no help from the rates, but he believed that such help was inconsistent with the existence of Voluntary Schools, and he, therefore, rejoiced to find a proposal made by the Government that those who contributed to the taxes of the country should pay part of the money arising from taxes in support of Voluntary Schools. Reference had been made to the County Palatine of Lancaster, and the name of the late Archbishop Benson had been mentioned in the Debate. It was stated that the late Primate had said that the benevolence of many in Lancashire was very inferior to the benevolence found in London. The venerable Prelate acted under a misapprehension, and with that candour which was part of his nature admitted in a letter to the newspapers that he was in error, and that the amount contributed in Lancashire to Voluntary Schools was far in excess of the amount contributed in London. He had confined his remarks as far as he possibly could to the question in hand, because he thought that injury was done to the cause of education by the discursive character of these Debates. He believed that if they dealt with one question at a time their progress would be more solid. He had confined his remarks to the case of Voluntary Schools alone, because he believed that alone was the question before the Committee. He regarded the proposals of the Government—although, perhaps, the proposal for association was somewhat attended with difficulties—as proposals which they ought all to support, and he felt grateful to the Government for their course in this matter. He believed that they had done their best to redeem their pledges, and that when the Measure was known in the country it would arouse a feeling of satisfaction, and that the position of Voluntary Schools, which was not only dear to the managers but also as dear to the parents of the children, would be rendered more secure by the action which the Government had taken in the proposals which they had now submitted to the House of Commons.

*Sir JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said he came to the House with the full intention of giving his vote in favour of the Resolution of the Government, but he was disappointed to find, not only that the Resolution was so narrow in its terms, but that, after the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, it carried with it certain provisions which made him hesitate to promise his vote. He was faced by an initial difficulty. He found it very difficult—nay, almost impossible—to dissociate local from Imperial interests. It was almost inevitable that the opinion of a Member of Parliament should be influenced by the position of his own constituency in regard to a great Imperial proposal like this Education Question. That had been the experience of several speakers that night. His right hon. and hon. Friends the Members for Bodmin and the Forest of Dean and Birmingham had all felt bound to place the needs of their own constituencies before the House, and to some extent to view the questions at issue with the eyes of their own constituencies. He therefore did not apologise for placing before the House the position in which he found himself in respect of his own constituency. He represented one of the most populous parts of Lancashire—a division of the county in which there had never been, and was not, a School Board or a Board School. ["Hear, hear!"] They last year educated their 10,000 children entirely in denominational schools, of which there were 48 in the division, and they raised in the same year £2,168 in voluntary contributions, which was equal to about a 4s. grant. They therefore felt it difficult, denominational educationalists as they undoubtedly were, to refuse this grant of 5s. if it was offered to them. ["Hear, hear!"] But they were not blind to the great danger that the grant, if given, might be used as a substitute for private subscriptions—[*Opposition cheers*]—and they were unwilling to run that risk. [*Opposition cheers.*] Men might argue that, as the point of efficiency had been reached in their schools, and as the inspectors were satisfied both as to the education given and as to the condition of their buildings, then this £2,500 (which would be the amount of a 5s. grant) would free them from the necessity for contributions. He could not find in the statement of the Leader of the House that there was to be any safeguard for the continuance of these private subscriptions. He therefore felt great difficulty indeed in following the right hon. Gentleman into the Lobby. [*Opposition cheers.*] He recognised that they could not fully debate the matter until they had seen the Bill, but he confessed he did not like the scheme of distribution. Above all things, he would like to see the necessitous schools helped more than those that did not so much require assistance, but he was afraid that the proposal as to distribution would create jealousy among the schools of the division. He did not like the proposed association or federation of these various denominational schools. Were they going to have the pooling of all their incomes, and to put on the shoulders of the prosperous denominational schools the burden of carrying those that were less prosperous? With regard to the omission of necessitous Board Schools, although those in his division were denominationalists, every one of them, at any rate by practice, they had no dislike to School Boards. They had no jealousy of them, and therefore they thought their omission from the benefit of this grant was very hard indeed. If the principle on which the Government were acting was to bring about a better and more efficient system of education, then, in leaving out those who required their help, they were not fulfilling their obligations to the country, and they were offending against every principle of equality. He was afraid he could not vote for the present Resolution, but when it came to granting the 5s. in Committee, then he could promise the Government his assistance.

*Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said that he should trespass for only a few minutes upon the time of the House. He should have preferred to wait until the Bill arrived at a later stage before he dealt with the provisions of the Measure, but there were some questions which it was only open to him to discuss at the present stage, and therefore he was compelled to refer to them on that occasion. He confessed that he had heard the very interesting speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury with some surprise. They thought that they were going to learn the details of some small Measure for the distribution of the sum voted last year, and they found that what was proposed by the Government Bill was really a new departure in our educational policy. Several hon. Members had spoken of Voluntary Schools as if they were of necessity denominational schools. That, however, was not the case. There were in many parts of the country, as in his own immediate neighbourhood, a great number of small parishes in which there were Voluntary Schools which were not denominational, but were maintained for the purpose of avoiding the elaborate and expensive machinery of a School Board, and the heartburnings that resulted from School Board elections. As far as denominational schools themselves were concerned he confessed that he had grave doubts as to the advantage of dogmatic theology for young children. The great founders of religions based their teaching not upon dogmatic theology but upon morals and conduct. However that might be, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that denominational schools were supported by a great number of our countrymen and therefore they were bound to regard them as forming a very important part of our educational system. He would venture to throw out two suggestions that he thought would greatly benefit Voluntary Schools and save expense to the rates. In the first place there were the class subjects, which were History, Geography, English, and Elementary Science. English schools were only allowed to take two of these subjects, whereas Scotch schools were allowed to take all four. The Scotch schools, therefore, were enabled to earn 2s. a head more than the English schools could. There could be no doubt that the Scotch system was the best from an educational point of view, and if permitted here also Voluntary Schools might earn 2s. per child more than it was now possible for them to do. We ought to encourage the study of these subjects in the smaller schools throughout the country. He could not see why our English Schools should be placed at a disadvantage in this respect. This was specially important in view of the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit. He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman in passing whether the 17s. 6d. limit could be removed in the case of the Board Schools as well as in that of the Voluntary Schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: It does not apply to them.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said the next point on which he should like to say a word was with reference to the subscriptions and the rates. Hon. Members would recognise that it was impossible that Voluntary Schools could be carried on without the aid of subscriptions, and that if the Voluntary Schools ceased to exist the cost to the ratepayers and the taxpayers of the country would be enormously increased. It must be admitted, however, that it was a great hardship upon those who subscribed to maintain the Voluntary Schools that they should also be called upon to pay rates for the maintenance of the Board Schools. It was obvious that in that case the subscribers to those schools had to pay twice over for the education of their district. He asked therefore whether it would not be fair to allow subscriptions to Voluntary Schools to count against the School Board rate. The rates would, in the long run, be relieved, because as Voluntary Schools were more economical than Board Schools, every £1 in subscriptions to the Voluntary Schools would save some £1 5s. to the rates. The adoption of his suggestion would greatly encourage subscriptions, and would therefore do much to assist the Voluntary Schools. It would also save rates and taxes, because it would go far to obviate the necessity for any call either on the ratepayers or on the National Exchequer. He should be prepared to support the Resolution which had been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, but he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether he could not, to a great extent, meet the needs and exigencies of the Voluntary

Schools—which formed so important and valuable a part of our educational system —by relaxing the rules with regard to the payment for class subjects and by allowing subscriptions to those schools to count against the rates.

MR. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) thought that a large amount of perverted ingenuity had been shown by the promoters of this Measure. It would have been easy to construct a small and good Bill, but this was a small and bad Bill. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman had been misled by the misrepresentations of his own friends—misrepresentations based upon fallacies. The first of such fallacies was that the condition of the Voluntary Schools was due to the competition of the Board Schools. That he denied. The pecuniary position of the Voluntary Schools was due to the growing requirements of the Education Department, which were due to the growing requirements of the public. The requirements of the Education Department had affected the Board Schools as well, and in endeavouring to meet them the Board Schools had incurred considerable expense. There had been no competition on the part of School Boards with the object of driving Voluntary Schools out of the field. For some seven years past most School Boards had been under the control of majorities, composed of Churchmen and Conservatives, and yet these very majorities—returned on the cry of economy and justice to Voluntary Schools—had been unable to check the expenditure of the Boards on education. That expenditure had gone on, and rightly so. Could anybody contend that the School Boards had spent too much money on education? Why, there was no country in the civilised world which did not spend, either actually or relatively, more on primary education than this country did. Surely when so much of the national welfare depended upon education it would not be right to check the expenditure of School Boards in a niggardly way. The simple and logical course for the Government to take would have been to grant to Board Schools and Voluntary Schools alike a sum in aid of their local expenditure. What harm would there have been in a Bill which said: "We have required more work from both Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, and therefore we will assist them both to meet their expenditure by a grant of 5s. more?". As to the repeal of the 17s. 6d. limit, it would result in placing the finances of the Voluntary Schools in four or five years in exactly the same position which they now occupied. Five shillings of State income would have been substituted for 5s. of local income; and four or five years hence the friends of the Voluntary Schools would be coming to that House and asking for a further grant, with less justification than they had now, because in that time local aid would very largely have ceased to be. Why was it that the Government were not prepared to give this 5s. grant all round? He ascribed it to the fact that they had been misled with regard to what the School Boards would most likely do with the 5s. grant. It had been assumed that if they gave more to the School Boards they would increase the competition of the Board School managers as against the Voluntary Schools. He did not believe that that would be the case. The School Boards had felt the strain of the requirements of the Education Department as much as the Voluntary Schools had, and they would gladly take an opportunity of reducing their rates to the amount that a 5s. grant would enable them to reduce them. If they compared the expenditure of the Government on the Metropolitan Police with the Government expenditure on the School Boards what did they find? The Police Rate amounted last year to £776,458, whilst the Imperial subsidy was £987,000. The rate levied by the School Board amounted to £1,473,125, whilst the Imperial subsidy was only £590,376. Thus, for the police that House granted in relief of local taxation £987 for every £776 raised by rates, whilst for the London Board Schools Parliament granted only £59 for every £147 raised by rates. In the provinces they found much the same state of things. The Provincial School Boards raised £2,146,043 in rates, and the Imperial subsidy was £2,050,174; but the county authorities raised in rates £2,289,265, and received as subsidy £2,375,984. Thus the Provincial School Boards received £205 in subsidy for every £214 raised by rates, whilst the county authorities received £237 in subsidy for every £228 raised by rates.

Surely the School Boards were justly entitled to a larger subsidy. If it was true, as he thought, that the School Boards would use this 5s. grant in relief of the rates, what could be said to justify the withholding of the grant from them? If it was said that the aim of the promoters of the Bill was to increase the finances of the Voluntary Schools as compared with those of the Board Schools, he would point out that that result would be achieved if the School Board rate was reduced by the amount of this 5s. grant, and the Voluntary Schools added the 5s. to their expenditure. The Bill, he maintained, contained elements of grave danger, and the first of these was the withdrawal of the 17s. 6d. limit. If they took away that check and safeguard, that protection against the withdrawal of voluntary contributions, in a very few years the income of the average Voluntary School would drop very nearly to the level of the present day. The second element was the proposal of associations of Voluntary Schools which, if they consisted more of urban than of rural schools were to receive more money than if they consisted of rural schools as compared with urban schools. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that urban schools were more in need of money than the rural schools. He denied this. In London there were federated Voluntary Schools under the Diocesan Board which were as badly off as any schools in the country; but if they took the Voluntary Schools as a whole they would find that the rural Voluntary Schools, like the rural Board Schools, were worse off than the urban Board and Voluntary Schools, and if more money was going to be given it should be to the rural schools and not to the urban schools. He did not gather from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that it was proposed to give any varying amounts as aids to schools according to their varied necessities. That was a most important point. It was essential in any well considered scheme of aid to the rural schools in particular that there should be a differentiation in the amount of aid given to them varying in inverse ratio according to the size of the schools. As to the compulsory federation plan, at present Voluntary Schools had the right to federate in a voluntary way. It was open to all Voluntary Schools at present to combine, but they did not care to do it. For example, they might have a Voluntary School with an active committee raising a considerable sum of money from local contributions; on the other hand they might have a school where the vicar and the committee did not do their duty in a business-like way; but the idea of the Government was to cast all the schools into the pool, the well-doing as well as the ill-doing. Unless they could show some reasonable cause for not federating they would not obtain any special aid at all. Here was a premium placed on incapacity, a special payment in respect of neglect of duty. Then there was the question as to the disposal of this money. In Clause IV. of last year's Bill there was an attempt to earmark the income for the purposes for which it was most required, but he did not gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill this year contained any proposal of the kind. There was nothing whatever to prevent the whole 5s. per child going, not to increase the staff and improve the payment of the poorly-paid teachers, but to relieve the subscribers or to increase the rent charge in the school accounts, and payable to the church or chapel connected with the schools. It appeared to him that the Bill was one which, except in the matter of size, was as bad as the Bill of last year. If the First Lord of the Treasury had been present during the whole of the discussion he would have seen that the omens were against his Bill already. ["No, no!"] This infantile Bill opened its eyes in much the same gloom as that in which its predecessor closed its eyes. [*Laughter.*] It had few friends on the opposite side of the House. Member after Member had spoken against the Bill, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to cast away the theological prejudice which made him inacapable of doing justice to the School Boards, and made this Measure an indirect negative attack on the School Boards, just as the Bill of last year was a positive and direct attack on the School Boards. If the right hon. Gentleman would specifically state that during the Session there would be a Bill brought in giving the grant to the Board Schools he would receive support from the Opposition side of the House. It was not too late to make this Bill a Measure for aiding Board Schools, and many Members were prepared to vote for a grant to Board and Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to the House to defer the general engagement on the educational Question. He could not imagine a conjuncture more favourable to that side of the House than that which occurred last Session. He would appeal to the Government to give the grant all round, and in that way they would do an act of justice which would be recognised by the House and the country, and which would do more to settle the Education Question upon a firm and friendly basis than a dozen Bills such as they had before the House to-night.

*MR. ALFRED HOPKINSON (Wilts, Cricklade) thought it had been proved, and, indeed, almost admitted, that if a Bill was passed on the lines of the Resolution before the House it would result in a condition of things which could not possibly be a permanent settlement of the question, and which would introduce new anomalies and new injustices. [*Opposition cheers.*] He said so not from any spirit of hostility to Voluntary Schools. He admitted fully that some Measure of relief was necessary for those schools. But the difficulties and injustices to which he referred were not merely as between Voluntary and Board Schools, but as between one locality and another—[*Opposition cheers*]—and which ought not to be allowed to exist even for the space of a single year. He had in his mind's eye two parishes side by side. In one there was an admirably conducted Voluntary School system, fair to the Dissenters, and where no religious difficulty whatever was felt. In the next parish there was a poor School Board. Now as between those two parishes he had no preference in this particular regard for one parish over the other, but he could not go down and say it was a fair way of dealing if, out of public funds to which both contributed equally, a large sum was given to the district where there was a Voluntary School and nothing whatever to the district where there was a poor School Board. [*Opposition cheers.*] He knew another and much more important place where there was an admirable School Board system, where 90 per cent. of the children attend the Board Schools, and where again no religious difficulty had ever been heard of. How could he possibly go down and say to the men in that town, nine-tenths of whom were fair-minded artisans, it was a right and reasonable thing that out of the general taxes to which they contribute their full quota practically nothing should be given to them, while a large amount was given to some neighbouring district which was no more populous, which might be richer, but which had neglected its educational duties? [*Opposition cheers.*] The only way out of the difficulty was to have some distinct and definite pledge that the question should be dealt with in favour of Board Schools, at all events the poorer Board Schools, on some early day. The mere statement that the question would be dealt with "if there was time" was not good enough. [*Opposition cheers.*] The right hon. Member for Bodmin had suggested one solution. Another would be, that before the Bill passed the House another Bill should be introduced for making a grant to Board Schools. If that were done then it might be possible to support the proposals of the Government; otherwise not. [*Opposition cheers.*] Individual opinions of private Members might not appear to be of much importance, but they were of importance to this extent—that if those who held them were there, and the Government were there with their support, it was because the statements such Members had made to the electors at the General Election were thought to be in accordance with justice and fairness. If this scheme were to stand and to stand alone without a distinct pledge of a further Bill he must confess that it would be impossible to make the same appeal to the electors on the same platform again. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*]

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said that the First Lord of the Treasury had probably by this time been disabused of the idea that a small Bill, if it were a bad Bill, was easier to pass than a big Bill. The Government had admitted the anomalies which existed in the present educational system, but they had only attempted to redress the grievances of one side. In dealing with the Church Schools the Government's was a cash transaction; but other parties had to be content with a promise for the future, subject to all Parliamentary accidents. It was said that this procedure was justified on account of the greater urgency of the case for the Voluntary Schools. One hon. Member even said that unless this aid were given the schools would perish. That confirmed the idea that the Church of England had attempted too great a task, in seeking to monopolise so large a part of the educational machinery of the country. The necessities of the Board Schools in poor districts were just as great; a fact which the Vice President had admitted last Session, It was said that the condition of the Voluntary Schools was brought about by the competition of the Board Schools. But there were thousands of parishes where no School Board existed. Again, the requirements of the Education Department fell equally on both classes of schools; and as to the rejoinder that the Board Schools could fall back upon the rates, it was quite obvious that the taxable power of a small and poor parish must be absolutely limited. The First Lord of the Treasury insisted that the control of the Education Department over the schools was quite sufficient; as the assistance given was State-aid and not rate-aid. But money did not supply everything that was necessary in the management of public schools. Public interest as well as public money was required; and the great virtue of local control was that it gave to all the people of a parish an interest in the parish schools. It had been said that parents showed their preference for Voluntary Schools by sending their children to such schools. But in 8,000 parishes parents could not do anything else, because in those parishes there were no other schools within their reach. He looked upon the scheme of the Government as a retrogressive scheme. It was in the teeth of the declarations of Members of the Government during the Recess, and notably of the Vice President of the Council. It took away from the Board Schools that which was their due, and differentiated between the Board Schools and the Voluntary Schools. The measure was a measure to bribe the inhabitants of parishes to maintain Voluntary Schools, by offering them increased assistance from the State; while, on the other hand, the friends of the Board Schools were penalised, because they were told that where Board Schools existed they should not receive a single penny from the grant. It was ridiculous to suppose that a one-sided and nakedly sectarian measure such as this would bring about the settlement of the Education Question which the First Lord of the Treasury anticipated. It was clear, even from the speeches delivered from the Ministerial side of the House, that the Bill, if passed into law, would simply add fuel to the controversial fire. It would increase the antagonism between the Voluntary and Board School systems, and, although he had no doubt as to what the issue would be in that struggle, in the interests of education and social peace he greatly desired that it should be avoided. [*Cheers.*]

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said he should support the Resolution, because he believed it would improve education in the Voluntary Schools, and especially those in the country districts. At the same time he was bound to sympathise with the expression of regret which had come from one of his hon. Friends that the Government had not been able to provide in the proposed Bill some relief for necessitous Board School districts. [*Opposition cheers.*] He was not, however, altogether surprised at the action of the Government, for undoubtedly they had reason to anticipate, from what had passed in many of the Debates of last year, that a separate proposal to give so much per child to the Voluntary Schools would have been unanimously accepted by the House. It was also pretty clear from certain speeches that any proposal the Government might have made in the Bill to assist necessitous School Boards would certainly have also been made a matter of controversy by hon. Members who insisted that every School Board had an equal claim to this relief. However, the Government had already on various occasions pledged themselves that the question of necessitous School Board districts would be dealt with, and dealt with promptly. The Committee was bound to rely loyally on those pledges. But he felt sure that if necessary they would have that pledge repeated in still stronger terms before the Debate closed.

Those of them who were in favour of both these measures of relief might, he thought, without hesitation, vote cordially in favour of this Resolution, leaving it to the discretion of the Government whether it should be dealt with in one Measure or in two. Surely there were very few hon. Members, whatever they might wish, who expected the disappearance at any rate in the immediate future of Voluntary Schools, and so long as any large section desired—as undoubtedly they did at the present moment—some security for definite religious instruction in the Schools, so long ought they to support the Voluntary Schools. He was always ready to admit that many School Boards did give admirable religious instruction, but there were many districts in the country where the ratepayers probably preferred to pay voluntary rates—not subscriptions—in order to avoid what they thought the unnecessary extravagance of School Board expenditure. The present policy of hon. Members opposite, was not so much an assault on the Voluntary Schools as a starving out policy. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought there was an increasing demand for a higher and better education in our elementary schools, the curriculum was always being extended, salaries were gradually rising, and the numbers of children in the schools were increasing. But they must remember the different conditions in which the Voluntary Schools and Board Schools were. The Board Schools had the purse of the ratepayer to draw upon, and although in a sense that purse was limited, yet they could not expect the same length of purse to exist among the subscribers to Voluntary Schools. It was not the fact that subscriptions to Voluntary Schools had, during the last 15 years fallen off; so far from that being the case there had been during the last 15 years an absolute increase of something like £150,000, and he found that the average per child had kept up to very nearly 6s. 9d. So that there was good evidence that the subscribers to Voluntary Schools were making laudable and substantial efforts to keep up with the constantly increasing demand which was made upon them. It was extremely difficult for any authority to discriminate between these different schools, and he very much doubted whether any discrimination could be made between town and country in this matter. It was very difficult to intrust any Government Department with wide powers of discretion. However wise, judicious, and fair they might be in reality, undoubtedly their action would give rise to accusations of favouritism. The difficulty might to some extent be got over by the Government proposal for the association of schools. Local knowledge and combination were wanted. He had always considered that the best thing for our Voluntary School system was to have more association of school managers. The great weakness of the country Voluntary Schools at any rate was isolation. So long as they were isolated they could not have really efficient teaching, and often they could not have really efficient management. Any Measure that would promote the association on a large scale of Voluntary Schools, would be of great permanent benefit to them and education generally. Whether it could be done by compulsion was doubtful. But any means short of compulsion might well be resorted to. Certainly the best guarantee against waste was to allot sums of money rather to groups of schools than individuals. For these reasons he thought the plan outlined in the Bill was likely at any rate for a certain number of years to give relief and improvement to our Voluntary School system. Whether it would prove a permanent solution of the question was very doubtful. Personally, he thought there was no permanent solution short of rate aid to Voluntary Schools wherever it might be required, and he would not hesitate to allow, where rate aid was received, a due proportion of popular representative control. The Government had been wise and statesmenlike to begin by a proposal which did no real injustice to any class of school, which would undoubtedly tend to relieve the pressure on Voluntary Schools, and with proper supervision would prove a permanent benefit to the education of the country.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) agreed that the pledge given by the First Lord of the Treasury as to extending the support proposed to be given by Board Schools to Voluntary Schools should be repeated in more definite terms. They ought to know whether the assistance proposed to be given in the future Bill to the Board Schools would be similar in extent and granted on similar principles to the assistance proposed to be given to Voluntary Schools. That proposal made no distinction between necessitous Voluntary Schools and those not necessitous. It was proposed to give a five per cent. grant for every child in every Voluntary School. He should like to know whether it was proposed to give a similar grant to all the children in Board Schools whether necessitous or not. He did not understand that the grant of five per cent. per child was to be given to the particular school which the child attended. He understood the object of grouping schools was to enable the grant earned by one child to be allocated to another. Would Board Schools be grouped for the same purpose or would the grants earned by children in prosperous Board Schools be allocated to less fortunate School Boards which might thereby be able to get a larger grant than was earned by their own children. The necessity of extending the provision to Board Schools seemed to underlie all the speeches delivered on the Opposition side. He entirely shared the view that not only ought relief to be given to necessi-Board Schools but to all alike. It was a mistake to treat this question as only affecting the interests of necessitous Board Schools. Necessitous ratepayers ought also to be considered who existed in all School Board districts wealthy or not. The richest School Board derived its rates from the ratepayers, many of whom were necessitous, and the ratepayers' pockets should be relieved as well as the pockets of contributors to Voluntary Schools. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would have to feel the difficulty which in many constituencies would be found very great that the Government had given large grants in relief of wealthy subscribers to Voluntary Schools, and refused or omitted to give any grant whatever, in relief of the pockets of the heavily burdened ratepayers. Hon. Gentlemen seemed to think they did well in denouncing School Board extravagance, because they thereby spoke in favour of the ratepayer, but School Board expenditure went no further than was necessitated by the exigencies of the case, and, therefore, the refusal to extend this grant to School Boards was simply a refusal to assist necessitous ratepayers where School Boards existed. Hon. Members opposite also argued that it was wise this legislation should be piecemeal, and that in the first place the relief should be confined to Voluntary Schools. They argued in this way because they thought it was easier to pass a Bill of a limited character than to pass one of an extended nature. That would be true if the limitation were one of the subjects of the Bill. He denied entirely that it was easier to pass a Bill if they limited the operation of the relief given by it to a particular section of the community. The machinery necessary for giving this relief was practically the same machinery as would be necessary if the Bill gave relief to Board Schools. He did not wish to attribute to the Government the sinister desire to pass this Bill, and the hope that some difficulty might arise which would make it impossible to pass another, but certainly one was forced to the belief that there was some extraordinary motive behind the desire to pass this Measure. There was another point which excited a very great suspicion in his mind. The word "voluntary" was introduced. It seemed to him it was absolutely unnecessary even for the purposes of the Government to introduce that word. If the word "elementary," were substituted, it would be perfectly possible to give the relief to Voluntary Schools, but it would also be possible to extend the operation of the Measure to Board Schools, if the House desired to do so. He put it to the First Lord of the Treasury, whether it would not be wise to make such an alteration in the wording of the Bill. That course would have been a much wiser one than passing an unnecessary and a stringent Resolution to tie the hands of the House so as to prevent equal justice being done to the Voluntary and Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"]

*MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said that the Debate that evening had been remarkable for more reasons than one. He had noticed with no little satisfaction, the improved friendliness of tone adopted by hon. Members on his side of the House towards the School Boards, and the absence of attack on the Voluntary Schools by hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] It appeared as though the Bill of last Session had really served a good purpose in bringing both sides of the House more nearly to an understanding on the great education question. ["Hear, hear!"] That being the case, he could not help expressing regret that the Government had not seen their way to take advantage of the *rapprochement*, and to bring in a scheme which, while doing justice to both Voluntary and Board Schools, would have met the general views of the House and of the country at large. [*Cheers.*] He could conceive of but one good excuse for dealing with only one section of the Government Scheme at the present time—namely, that they intended to pass this Measure and bring it into operation by March 31st, so that the Voluntary Schools might draw their grants up to the end of the present financial year. ["Hear, hear!"] That was the general belief in the country, and he must say that it was one of the surprises of the evening to find now that the Government did not intend to take that course. [*Opposition cheers.*] He could not understand why the passage of this Measure had not been facilitated by the incorporation in one and the same Bill of proposals for the necessitous Board Schools. He hoped that nobody would accuse him of any lack of sympathy with Voluntary Schools, because he ventured to uge that the claims of the necessitous Board School districts should be either considered in that Measure before the House or at an early date after the present proposals were passed. To that end, a promise or pledge should be given by the First Lord of the Treasury to undertake a Bill of that nature in somewhat more explicit terms than they had heard that afternoon from him. He was not desirous of seeing that pledge form part of the present Resolution, nor was he desirous of seeing a Bill introduced at once in order to give the House an earnest of security for the pledge. It would be sufficient for him, and doubtless for the House if the First Lord of the Treasury would state to them, in unequivocal language, that it was his intention to bring in a Bill dealing with the necessitous Board School districts at the earliest possible date. Otherwise he had no doubt that one of the earliest effects of this Bill would be to intensify the attack made on the voluntary system, and to more acutely develop the feeling of injustice which now existed throughout the country in regard to the Board Schools, and that sense of injustice unless it was removed would eventually drag down the Voluntary Schools. He was therefore pleading not only in the interests of the poorer School Board districts, but also in the interests of the Voluntary Schools that the two Measures should have been placed before the Committee at one and the same time. ["Hear, hear!"] His sympathy with the Voluntary School system, and with the Church of England had been measured by many a Sunday's work in their behalf during the last 25 years, and he hoped, therefore, that no one would accuse him of attempting to deprive the Voluntary Schools of the funds which he knew they needed so much, because he pleaded that the necessitous Board Schools should receive equal relief. ["Hear, hear!"] He knew there were many Voluntary Schools which needed relief in buildings, appliances, and staff, not through the competition of neighbouring Board Schools, but through the constantly increasing demands made by the Central Department. Those demands the Board Schools were able to meet, but the Voluntary Schools through lack of funds had been unable to do so. There was the inequality between the two systems—inequality not created by the Board Schools but the ever increasing demands of the Department and the failure of the locality to meet those demands, with the result that in many districts the Voluntary Schools compared unfavourably with the neighbouring Board Schools. Yet he knew that many of the Voluntary Schools were well equipped, well staffed, and well managed, and could compare favourably in every way with the very best Board School in the country. These were schools which did not need relief, and the managers of which, if left to themselves would hardly apply for relief under this Bill, and they certainly would not do so if any conditions were attached to the granting of that relief, and to him it seemed to be folly to propose any scheme which provided that those schools which did not need relief should share in the money which was so much wanted by the poorer schools. ["Hear, hear!"] There might on that ground be something to be said for this system of federation—a system which, he thought, would need more explanation, and no doubt would be more fully understood when the terms of the Bill were before them. For the moment he would like to ask for information at once as to the possible size of these federations—whether two schools could form a federation, for example, or whether it would be a federation covering two or three counties. Much would depend on the area over which the federation would have control. He must say, in passing, that he regretted that some such system of federation was not also to be compulsorily applied to the small School Boards of the country, so that proper and more efficient management might be secured. But his object in rising that night was rather to emphasise the urgent, the crying, necessity that existed for the relief, not of the School Boards, not of the Board Schools, but of the ratepayer—if they liked, of the Churchman—in the School Board districts, who for the last 25 years had been compelled to pay a rate which pressed with enormous severity on the Churchman and on the ratepayer, who was to have no relief under this proposal, while a neighbouring district where probably the Voluntary Schools had been supported by not more than two-and-a-half per cent. of the population, would receive relief. He took his own constituency—one he had brought before the Committee and the House on previous occasions, and, he was sorry to say, should be compelled to bring forward until relief was granted to the district—an area, including a population of over a quarter of a million, and with a School Board rate of 2s. 6d. in the pound. This rate was not due to extravagance—he could not press that too strongly on his hon. Friends on that side of the House. Anybody with a grain of common sense would see that, with a rate of these proportions, the ratepayers would take pretty good care that there was no extravagance on the part of their representatives. The very existence of that heavy rate was in itself a check upon all extravagance. The high rate was simply due to the fact that they had a low rateable value and a very dense population, coupled, perhaps, with the other influencing cause, that it was a new district, formed since the Act of 1870, and therefore but slightly supplied with Voluntary Schools. Let them put this Bill on the very lowest, the most immoral grounds they could—that this Bill was for the relief of the Church supporters of the Government. He did not pretend for a single instant that that was the ground to put it upon, but let them assume it for the sake of argument. Then, surely the Churchman in a district who had been contributing to the support of the Voluntary Schools that were there, and had been compelled to go on, year after year, paying this constantly increasing School Board rate, might well look to the Government and claim relief with as much justice and with as much hope of receiving sympathy as a Church supporter of Voluntary Schools in another district. And, should he say with greater expectation of securing relief, and with greater hope of securing sympathy than the Churchman in another district who had not supported the Voluntary Schools. It must be clearly understood that of that one-third of the population which now paid no School Board rate, but very few indeed of those ten million people subscribed at the present time to Voluntary Schools. Might he venture to say that if Churchmen generally had done their duty to their schools—ay! and Nonconformists too, who had kept their own separate management—if they had done their duty to their schools as well, as thoroughly and as loyally as the small percentage had done, then this claim would not have been made on the Government for relief. Take a district like Preston where the support of the Voluntary Schools had fallen entirely upon the purse of the few, and where the great mass of the population had shirked their duty to their schools and evaded their responsibilities. He appealed to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether he was not accurately describing Preston, as a town which had successfully resisted the advent of a School Board, partly on account of its love for Voluntary Schools, and partly on account of its dislike of the School Board rate, and that the number of those who had resisted it on account of their dislike of the School Board rate was very much larger than those who had shown their loyalty to Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): Really, Mr. Lowther, I must just say one word.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: "Order, order!" Mr. Gray.

*MR. GRAY continuing, said he hoped he was not misrepresenting his hon. Friend's constituency. He had no intention of doing so when he said he was informed by some of the most energetic supporters of the Church in Preston quite recently, that unfortunately every effort they had made on behalf of their Voluntary Schools, fell largely and constantly on the same few individuals who were consistent in their support, and they had regretted, as everyone, every friend of the Voluntary system must regret, that the large mass of these so-called Church supporters had not contributed to the support of the Church Schools. He ventured to say that those who were labouring in these necessitous Board districts, had as much right to appeal to the Government for assistance as those who had failed to support the schools in Voluntary School areas, and he very bitterly regretted that the scheme now before the Committee left these necessitous districts altogether unprovided with relief, and he feared with but very scanty assurances as to the future. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY "No, no,!"] He was very glad to hear that disclaimer. He must say that from the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman, he had a hope, a very strong hope, that in the early part of this Session some provision would be made for them.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY [29th JANUARY].

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1896-7.

Resolution reported;

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £255,300, be granted to Her Mejesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1897."

Resolution agreed to.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

MILITARY WORKS [MONEY].

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of any sums not exceeding in the whole £5,458,000, for the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow by means of terminable annuities, payable out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, such sums as may be required for the purpose of providing money for the issue of the above-mentioned sum of £5,458,000 out of the Consolidated Fund, or the repayment to that Fund of all or any part of the sum so issued, and also to authorise the application of the Surplus of Income above Expenditure for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1897, towards paying any sums authorised to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund for Military Works."

Resolution Read a Second time.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) hoped the Government would not press this Report that night. If they did he should move the adjournment. There had been but an unsatisfactory discussion in Committee on the subject, the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill not having complete information. There was one subject upon which considerable interest was felt out of doors, and that was in reference to the large sum asked for for the erection of forts on the ranges of hills around London. He did not think the matter ought to be pressed through quite so quickly as this. It was a very extraordinary proposal, and the Government ought to give them fuller information about the matter. Although the amount involved might appear to be small, the business of the fortification of this great metropolis would lead to a large expenditure, and should be carefully looked into. Unless a full and satisfactory explanation was given, he thought it would be desirable to report Progress.

MR. BRODRICK remarked that the hon. Gentleman spoke at some length when this Resolution was before the Committee and when it seemed to be the general desire to get on with the discussion. The point the hon. Member raised had simply reference to the particulars of an expenditure—perhaps the smallest in the Bill; and what he had asked was that the Government should give full information and details as to every site on which it was proposed to mobilise troops. He might say that the Government desired to give the House every possible information in their power, but it would not be possible to designate, for the benefit of the whole world, the precise site on which it was intended, in case of invasion, to mobilise troops. But at the same time he should be perfectly prepared on the proper opportunity—which was on the Second Reading of the Bill—to give the House as full information as he possibly could on any subject that it seemed to be the general wish of the House to go into. As he told the Committee on Friday, the Government proposed to circulate with the Bill a full statement of all the places where it was proposed to reconstruct barracks at a cost of nearly three millions of money. As regarded the question of defence, he thought the hon. Gentleman would see there were limits to the disclosures it was desirable to make. On Friday he endeavoured to be perfectly frank with the Committee; he put before it every class of expenditure, with, as far as possible, details of that expenditure, and he trusted the hon. Member and the House would allow the Report stage to be taken, so that the Bill might be introduced. If hon. Gentlemen would look at the Bill, and select the points on which they desired to concentrate their attention, the Government would endeavour, to the best of their ability, to satisfy every reasonable demand that might be made in the matter.

*SIR C. DILKE, whilst supporting the Government on this question, was bound to say that the Under Secretary for War had himself to blame for attention being called to this particular item mentioned by his hon. Friend, for the right hon. Gentleman introduced the matter on this head in a most unfortunate way. This was not a new expenditure for the fortification of London, but was the completion of a policy which had been carried out steadily ever since 1888, and which was almost concluded by the late Government, who finished the more important of the works which were contemplated in this scheme. It had been represented that this was a new departure—

MR. BRODRICK did not think the right hon. Gentleman understood what he said the other night. What he said in the schedule under which this was contained was that the item was of a somewhat novel character, but that there was an exception, which was the item as to the fortification of London, which he then pointed out had been the policy of successive Governments since 1888.

*SIR C. DILKE said that, as a matter of fact, anybody who took a walk round all these places on a Saturday afternoon might see them for himself, as the principal ones were finished. It was a strange thing that, as a matter of fact, this policy had never been discussed in that House, although Mr. Stanhope mentioned it in 1888. What was intended was the erection of certain defences for the decentralisation of stores for the use of Volunteers that might be mobilised at Dorking, Boxhill, Guildford and other places. He thought it was a pity that a language of mystery had been used about the matter. He was aware that some hon. and gallant Members opposite, and some hon. Gentlemen who belonged to the Navy, objected to it; but he himself supported it, and should vote in its favour in every division, as he believed it would give a certain amount of confidence to the public and the Press under certain circumstances.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) deprecated the discussion of what was a very serious matter before they had the Bill in their hands. He strongly opposed that portion of it which dealt with anything like the fortification of London. That was only one item of the Bill, which covered a vast amount of ground and dealt with the most serious questions as to the defence of our Empire.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT thought it was very desirable that they should know whether London was being surrounded with fortifications. Nobody could say that that was not the impression conveyed who was in the habit of reading *The Times* newspaper. The solemn remonstrance given in *The Times* in regard to the important speech of the Under Secretary for War against the proposal of the fortification of London showed what had been the impression produced by the right hon. Gentleman.

If that were a wrong impression, some other time than a quarter past 12 oclock should, he thought, be chosen for explaining it, so that the public could be made to understand that it was an entire delusion which had been disavowed by Her Majesty's Government. He thought it had created almost as much astonishment and amusement as the Bill which was introduced that afternoon. [*Laughter.*] The Fortification of London Bill and the Government Education Bill were two Bills which had taken the public entirely by surprise. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!" *and laughter.*] The country should have the opportunity of inquiring into both Measures. He hoped the Government would, at all events, say whether they were going to erect fortifications round London, or whether they were not.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) hoped he could set the apprehensions of the right hon. Gentleman at rest. The Government were not going to erect a series of fortifications round London; they were simply going to complete the work which was undertaken by the right hon. Gentleman himself. [*Laughter.*] It was a work of a very simple character. It had cost, he thought, some £68,000 in the past, and in the future it was calculated to cost not more than £96,000, and he did hope that that being so the Committee would feel that there was not a very important question at issue, and that they would allow his right hon. Friend to bring in the Bill.

MR. DILLON thought it was the duty of Irish Members to resist such an expenditure. He did not care very much to what purpose the English people put their money provided they let Ireland have a fair share. The expenditure on military armaments and on the Navy during the last four or five years had been monstrous. He hoped they would have the support of the Conservative Members for Ireland in opposing this Report, because the present expenditure was so enormous that Ireland was unable to bear her share of the burden.

*MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport) thought that the expenditure of this additional sum of £96,000 would be a little wasteful. The statement was that London was going to be fortified. In his constituency there had been erected splendid monuments of the Palmerston era in the form of so-called fortifications. Lord Palmerston frightened the country into spending 11 millions of money. The whole town was barricaded with earthworks which were never worth a penny. Last year, as an act of humanity to the population, the War Department agreed to assent to the Town Council removing these ridiculous works, which they have now done at their own expense. In face of that experience, he thought they ought to resist this attempt to waste £96,000. The sooner the item was removed from the Bill the better it would be.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) asked how much money was to be spent in barracks in Ireland. In many places the existing barracks were almost falling to pieces. Three years ago a promise was made that the barracks in his constituency would be put into a decent condition, but nothing had yet been done. Was provision made in this Bill for the necessary expenditure? He also wanted to know what proportion of the whole sum asked for by the Government was to be expended in Ireland. He fancied that the amount intended to be expended in fortifying Berehaven and Lough Swilly was exceedingly small.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid) emphasised the statements of previous speakers, and hoped that the works in Ireland would not be proceeded with until Irish opinion had been consulted. He trusted that the Motion would be pressed to a division.

Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—The House divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 29.—(Division List—No. 9—appended.)

AYES.

Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Caldwell, James
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clough, Walter Owen
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H A. E
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse

Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dane, Richard M,
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fairbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Fortescue
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hobhouse, Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenny, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
McCalmont, Maj.-Gn. (Ant'm, N)
Malcolm, Ian
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of W.)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Jos. Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Birrell, Augustine
Cawley. Frederick
Colville, John
Crean, Eugene
Daly, James
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lambert, George
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Logan, John William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Hudd'rsf'ld)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Kearley and Mr. Lough.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Balfour and Mr. Powell-Williams.

Bill to provide for defraying the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services," presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday, and to be printed.—[Bill 105.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 24th February.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

Read a Second time, and committed for this day.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND ACT (1885) AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee deferred until Wednesday.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [29th January] further adjourned till Monday next.

SHOPS EARLY CLOSING BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 10th February.

MOTIONS.

OCCUPYING TENANTS ENFRANCHISEMENT (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE).

Bill to enable Occupying Tenants of houses and places of business to purchase the Fee Simple of their holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bartley, Sir Frederick Segar Hunt, and General Goldsworthy; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 10th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 106.]

MARRIED PERSONS SMALL INDUSTRIAL INCOMES (TAX RELIEF).

Bill to extend relief from Income Tax to Married Persons with Small Industrial Incomes, however earned, which do not exceed five hundred pounds a year, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bartley and Mr. Loder; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 107.]

BUILDING FEUS AND LEASES (SCOTLAND).

Bill to amend the Law relating to Feus and Leases for Building in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Colville, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Souttar; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 108.]

MILITARY WORKS BILL (SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED WORKS).

Copy presented, of Schedule showing Proposed Expenditure on Barrack Services under the Military Works Bill [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, Etc.).

On the Motion that the House do adjourn,

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY said: It may be convenient to the House that I should state that, as we were unable to finish the Committee stage of the Education Resolution to-night, I shall ask the House to give the Government facilities for finishing the matter to-morrow night.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that on the Notice Paper there was a matter of an important character for to-morrow, and whether, if he appropriated a private Members' day so soon in the Session he would be willing to give facilities for the consideration of this important matter at some future period of the Session. It was very hard upon Members who had been fortunate in the ballot to have their opportunity taken away from them.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I think it is very hard, and I would much rather be discussing or listening to the discussion of my hon. Friend's Motion than hearing the same arguments on this matter repeated *ad nauseam*; but I have no choice.

Mr. LOUGH asked the right hon. Gentleman whether as great interest was taken on both sides of the House in this important matter, it was his intention, if the Debate was not finished to-morrow to go on on Wednesday and Thursday, or whether he would insist on the division to-morrow.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: Oh, I hope we shall finish to-morrow.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I must protest against the language held by the right hon. Gentleman. In the discussion to-night a large amount of the condemnation of his Resolution came from his own supporters, and yet the right hon. Gentleman says that was a repetition of arguments *ad nauseam*. In my opinion that is not proper language to address to either side of the House. I venture to say that if he expected to dispose of such a question as this in a single night's discussion he is entirely misapprehending the whole character of this Bill, and the necessity of the country understanding what the operation of the Bill will be. When he tells us he is going to rush this Bill through in a single night's discussion, with the amount of differences of opinion which has been exhibited to-night, I must say the right hon. Gentleman has formed a very erroneous judgment of the character of the Bill, and of the manner it is likely to be dealt with in the House of Commons.

House adjourned at a Quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 2nd February 1897.

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate enactments relating to the Post Office was presented by the Duke of Norfolk; Read 1ª; to be printed: and to be Read 2ª on Friday next—[No. 9.]

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS AND CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

Moved, That a Committee of Seven Lords be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Commons to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session (*The Lord Chancellor*); Agreed to: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. Chancellor.
E. Morley.
L. Watson.
L. Herschell.
L. Thring.
L. Welby.
L. James of Hereford.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a Chairman;

Then a Message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint them therewith, and to request them to appoint Seven Members of that House to be joined with the said Committee pursuant to the Resolution of this House of the 28th of January last and to the Message of the House of Commons of yesterday signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 2nd February, 1897.

PRIVATE BILLS.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS reported, that, in accordance with Standing Order LXXIX., he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and they had determined that the Bills contained in the following List should originate in the House of Lords, viz.:—

1. Aberbrothwick Harbour.
2. Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway.
3. Assam Railways and Trading Company.
4. Barry Railway.
5. Belfast Water.
6. Birmingham Churches.
7. Borrowstounness Town and Harbour.
8. Bournemouth Corporation.
9. Brading Harbour and Railway
10. Bray and Enniskerry Railway (Extension of Time).
11. Bristol Corporation (Docks).
12. Bristol Extension.
13. Bristol Tramways.
14. Bute Dock and Rhymney Railway Companies Amalgamation.
15. Bute Docks, Cardiff.
16. Caerphilly Urban District Council.
17. Caledonian Railway.
18. Carnarvon Corporation.
19. Chatham Loop Railway.
20. Christchurch Inclosure Allotments.
21. Clontarf and Hill of Howth Tramroad.
22. Clydebank and District Water.
23. Clyde Navigation (Extension of Time).
24. Cordoba Central Railway Company.
25. Cowes Gas.
26. Cowes Harbour (No. 1).
27. Cowes Harbour (No. 2).
28. Craigcrook Mortification.
29. Crichton Royal Institution.

30. Crowhurst, Sidley, and Bexhill Railway.
31. Deal and Walmer Water.
32. Dublin Eye and Ear Hospital.
33. Dublin United Tramways (Electrical Power).
34. Dublin United Tramways (New Lines).
35. Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway (New Ross and Waterford Extension).
36. Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway (Shillelagh Extension, &c.).
37. Eastbourne Corporation Water.
38. Eastbourne Water.
39. Easton and Church Hope Railway.
40. Edinburgh American Land Mortgage Company.
41. Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours.
42. Fylde Water (Transfer).
43. Glasgow Harbour Tunnel Company.
44. Gravesend and Milton Water.
45. Gravesend and Northfleet Water Board.
46. Gravesend Corporation Water.
47. Great Northern Railway (Ireland).
48. Great Western Railway (Bristol Lines).
49. Great Western Railway (Truro and Newquay Railway).
50. Guild of Literature and Art (Dissolution).
51. Harrogate Corporation (Water Transfer).
52. Harrogate Water.
53. Hastings and St. Leonards Tramway.
54. Hastings Harbour.
55. Hastings Harbour District Railway.
56. Hastings Harbour Railway.
57. Hunstanton Water and Gas.
58. King's Lynn Corporation.
59. Kingstown and Kingsbridge Junction Railway (Abandonment).
60. Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railway.
61. Lincoln and East Coast Railway and Dock.
62. Liverpool City Churches.
63. Liverpool Corporation (No. 1).
64. Liverpool Corporation (No. 2).
65. Liverpool Corporation Tramways.
66. Llanelly Harbour.
67. London and South Western Railway (Meon Valley Railway).
68. London and South Western Railway (Various Powers).
69. London Bank of Australia.
70. Loughborough Corporation.
71. Lowestoft Corporation.
72. Lowestoft Water and Gas.
73. Malvern Link Urban District Gas
74. Malvern Urban District Gas.
75. Manchester Ship Canal.
76. Mason's Orphanage.
77. Mason University College.
78. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
79. Midland and South Western Junction Railway.
80. Morecambe Urban District Council.
81. Mumbles Railway and Pier (Extension of Time).
82. Nar Valley Drainage.
83. Neath Corporation Tramways.
84. Neath Harbour (Extension of Time).
85. Newhaven and Seaford Water.
86. New Hunstanton Water and Gas.
87. Newport Corporation.
88. Newry Navigation.
89. North London Commercial Permanent Building Society.
90. North London Railway.
91. North Pembrokeshire and Fishguard Railway.
92. Provident Life Office.
93. Railway Clearing House.
94. Railway Clearing System Superannuation Fund.
95. Railway Passengers' Assurance.
96. Rathmines and Rathgar Township Tramways and Improvement.
97. Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway.
98. Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water.
99. Rio Tinto Company.
100. St. Anne's-on-the-Sea Gas.
101. Southampton Corporation Tramways.
102. Southampton Corporation Water.
103. South Eastern Railway.
104. Stirling Burgh (Gas).
105. Stromness Harbour.
106. Swansea Corporation Tramways.
107. Swansea Improvements and Tramways.
108. Taff Vale Railway.
109. Taunton Gas.
110. Torquay Corporation Water.
111. Tyne Improvement.
112. Tynemouth Corporation Water.
113. Tynemouth Gas.
114. Vale of Glamorgan Railway.

115. Vale of Rheidol Light Railway.
116. Whiting's Patent.
117. Windsor Dock, Cardiff.
118. Wrexham, Mold, and Connah's Quay Railway.

SHOPS BILL.

Second Reading deferred from to-morrow till Wednesday, 10th February.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

FOOD SUPPLIES (UNITED KINGDOM.)

MR. HENRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens): To call attention to the wholly inadequate production of food supplies within the area of the United Kingdom in relation to its large and increasing population; and to move, That, in the opinion of this House the dependence of the United Kingdom on foreign imports for the necessaries of life, and the consequences that would arise therefrom in the event of war, demand the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government. [Tuesday, 2nd March.]

RUSSIA IN NORTH-EAST ASIA.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): To call attention to the great advance of Russian power in north-east Asia and generally; and to move a Resolution. [Tuesday, 2nd March.]

TAXATION ON CLERICAL INCOMES.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): To call attention to the unequal and increasing pressure of Local and Imperial Taxation upon the Incomes of the Clergy; and to move a Resolution. [An early day.]

POST OFFICE (FOUR MILE RADIUS.)

MR. C. T. GILES (Cambridge, Wisbech): That, having regard to the profits made by the Post Office, it is the duty of that Department to deliver letters to all persons in Great Britain and Ireland living within a four mile radius of a Post Office. [An early day.]

ROYAL PATRIOTIC FUND.

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): To call attention to the administration of the Royal Patriotic Fund Commissioners and move a Resolution.

FLOATING DERELICTS.

MR. CUMMING MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): On going into Committee of Supply, to call attention to the subject of floating derelicts, and move, That, in view of the number of derelict ships which have been proved to be continually present on the great Atlantic Ocean steamship and sailing routes, and which are a source of danger to all ships navigating that ocean, it is desirable that Her Majesty's Government should station a cruiser or cruisers at Queenstown, or some such port on the Irish coast, charged with the duty of searching for derelicts, and towing them into harbour or destroying them, as seems best to the officer in charge.

QUESTIONS.

BELFAST TEXTILE TRADES (FINES).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE, (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that many girls engaged in the textile trades in Belfast, have struck against the long lists of large fines recently placarded in the mills; and, whether instructions have been given, either to the local Inspector of Factories, or to the Women's Factory-inspection Department of the Home Office, to inquire whether the proposed fines are "fair and reasonable" under the Truck Act of 1895, with a view to their carrying out the duty of enforcement of the law imposed by the Truck Act of 1887?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Yes, Sir, the strike in question has been engaging my anxious attention. I understand that many of the workpeople have returned to work, and I have been hoping that the matter would be settled by mutual agreement; if, however, this should fail, it may be necessary to have recourse to proceedings under the Truck Act of last Session, which, for the first time gives the workers full protection against all unfair or unreasonable fines. It is the duty of the inspector, with whom I am in constant communication, to see that the Act is complied with, and very precise instructions have been given to him and all the inspectors on the subject.

AGRICULTURAL PRICES (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether, in view of the admitted fall in the prices of agricultural produce in Ireland, he will consider the advisability of bringing some pressure within the law to bear on Irish landlords to induce them to give their tenants abatements in rents now due and falling due; and (2), is it his intention to employ the forces of the Crown in carrying out evictions in cases where abatements were refused, and tenants were unable to enter Court in order to have their rents revised?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have no means of exercising influence in the direction suggested in the first paragraph of the Question. My information, however, is to the effect that landlords on many estates have given abatements in rents. There is no connection between the employment of the forces of the Crown and the refusal on the part of a landlord to grant an abatement in particular cases, as the sheriff is entitled to demand and receive the protection of the forces of the Crown in executing all decrees of Courts of Justice, and I have no option in the matter. I may add that the number of evictions throughout Ireland in the years 1895 and 1896 was lower than in any year since 1877.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked if the statement of the right hon. Gentleman included the practical evictions, though not the physical evictions, carried out under Section 7 of the Act of 1887?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am speaking of evictions that have actually taken place.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (SCOTLAND).

*MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the numerous complaints of illegal trawling off the coasts of Scotland, he will state why the Fishery Board for Scotland have failed to give effect, so far as the Island of Lewis is concerned, to the provisions of Section 10, sub-Section (1), of the Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act 1895, which empowers the Board to make a bye-law or bye-laws directing that the methods of fishing known as beam trawling and otter trawling shall not be used in any area or areas under the jurisdiction of Her Majesty within 13 miles of the Scottish coast; and, whether it is the intention of the Fishery Board for Scotland to make a bye-law dealing with this matter at an early date?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): As the hon. Member should be aware, Section 10, sub-Section (1), of the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Act 1895, can only be acted upon if the concurrence of the States Signatories of the North Sea Convention has been obtained. The whole question is at present engaging the earnest attention of Her Majesty's Government; but, as it involves points of great difficulty, no decision has yet been arrived at.

EVICTIONS (CONNEMARA).

MR. W. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that four families, numbering in all 26 souls, are left homeless as the result of evictions in Carne, Connemara, the names being Pat. Mulkerrin, Letterard, seven in family; Widow Folan, Letterard, seven in family; Widow King, Mace, eight in family; and Tom Connelly, Mace, ten in family; that all the belongings of the poor people were carried outside their dwellings, the doors of the houses locked, and no one admitted back as caretakers; (2) whether the relieving officer attended these evictions, and whether he has seen any of these families since and offered them either indoor or outdoor relief; and (3) whether the Local Government Board would issue special instructions to relieving officers in future to attend such evictions and offer relief when necessary?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The persons named in the first paragraph were evicted on the 18th January for non-payment of rent. The relieving officer was present on the date specified in the eviction notices, but the evictions did not, however, take place on that date. On application being made to him by the wives of Pat Mulkerrin and Thomas Connelly he offered them relief inside the workhouse. He refused to give them out-door relief as they had cattle, sheep, and potatoes. Neither Mrs. King nor Mrs. Folan has made any application to the relieving officer for relief. As regards the last paragraph, having regard to Sections 2 and 4 of the 11 & 12 Vict., cap. 47, the Local Government Board do not consider any further special instructions are required. I may add that I am informed that Mulkerrin and Mrs. Folan have since been re-instated in their holdings.

CALAIS HARBOUR.

SIR BEVAN EDWARDS (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if the mails for the Continent which should have left Dover on Saturday night the 23rd January were detained their till 10.30 a.m. on the 24th in consequence of the difficulty of entering Calias Harbour; and, if so, why they were not sent to Folkestone for shipment to Boulogne as on a previous occasion.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): It is the case that the night mails for the Continent on the occasion referred to were delayed throngh difficulty in entering Calais Harbour during the storm; but the circumstances were not identical with those of the previous case referred to by the hon. and gallant Member. Arrangements have been concerted with the contractors and the French Post Office to meet the case of an accumulation of mails at Dover through protracted bad weather; and such an accumulation was avoided on the previous occasion by using the Boulogne route. But in cases where it is uncertain whether the Calais route will not be practicable after a short delay, the expense of diversion from the regular route is not considered justifiable in order to avoid the chance of delay to one mail only. In the particular case of the 23rd ultimo considerable uncertainty existed, and, as it turned out, the Saturday night and Sunday morning mails were taken to Calais together on Sunday morning.

TELEPHONE SERVICE (TUNBRIDGE WELLS).

MR. A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the long continued complaints of the inefficiency and costliness of the local telephone service at Tunbridge Wells; whether he is aware that a large number of subscribers, owing to the impossibility of getting any improvement from the National Company, have given notice to withdraw their subscriptions; whether he has received a Resolution, passed last week unanimously, by the Town Council of Tunbridge Wells, asking him to give a licence for the formation of a local company; whether a similar request was made to him by a deputation in May last year; and whether he will be willing to grant this request?

MR. HANBURY: Yes, Sir. The attention of the Postmaster General has been called to the complaints from Tunbridge Wells. He is not aware of the number of subscribers who have given notice to withdraw their subscriptions. The Resolution passed at a meeting of the Town Council on the 6th of January duly reached the hands of the Postmaster General, who caused its receipt to be acknowledged on the 11th of January. A request for a licence to enable a local company to be established in Tunbridge Wells was made by a Deputation which was introduced to the Postmaster General on the 19th of May last by the hon. Member. Since then, the Postmaster General understands the National Telephone Company, by arrangement with the Corporation, have doubled their telephone wires and placed them underground so as to meet the complaints of inefficiency, and he has reason I believe that the service has been considerably improved. He is still in communication with the Town Council; with the Telephone Subscribers' Committee; and with the National Company, on the subject of the Telephone service at Tunbridge Wells, and he is not at present in a position to come to a decision as to the course which he should adopt.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN asked if the right hon. Gentleman could give any indication when a decision might be expected; an early answer was promised to the deputation last May.

MR. HANBURY: I cannot say, but I will put the matter before the Post-Master General.

MANSLAUGHTER AT MANCHESTER.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has decided to recommend Her Majesty to reduce the sentence of three years' imprisonment passed on J. Hall at the Autumn Assizes in Manchester for the manslaughter of his wife, and in support of which appeal a memorial containing 12,000 signatures was presented to him at the close of last year?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have not come to any decision at present, as I thought it desirable to communicate with the learned Judge who tried the case, and his answer has not yet reached me.

DUTY ON SCOTCH HERRINGS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the recommendations of the Fishery Board for Scotland in the 14th Report, he is prepared to represent to the Governments of Austria and Russia the need of the reduction in the duty on herrings imported from Scotland into those countries?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MR. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): We have decided, after consultation with the Secretary for Scotland, that under existing circumstances there would be no advantage in making such representations.

INDIAN ARTILLERY AND ENGINEERS (CADETS).

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has received a sworn declaration made by Colonel A. C. Turner, Colonel C. H. Spragge, Colonel J. F. Brough, and Colonel A. N. Pearse, all of the Royal Artillery, with reference to the circumstances under which 16 successful candidates who had competed for cadetships in Addiscombe College, in December 1859, with a view of obtaining commissions in the Indian Artillery and Engineers, were in December 1860 induced to accept commissions in Her Majesty's Royal Artillery or Engineers, the Government having, while these cadets were pursuing their course for the Indian Army at Addiscombe, decided not to make any more appointments to the Indian Artillery and Engineers; whether these Officers had passed the examination prescribed by the regulations for the admission of candidates for cadetships in the Engineers and Artillery of Her Majesty's Indian forces, under the 34th clause of the Act of 21 & 22 Vict., c.106, and been sworn in as Indian cadets, and on their part had duly fulfilled the terms and conditions of the regulations; whether his attention has been particularly drawn to the statement in the declaration that early in December 1860 the 16 cadets, of whom these officers are the survivors, were asked by Sir Frederick Abbott, the Governor of Addiscombe, if, as no more appointments were to be made for India, they would accept commissions in Her Majesty's Royal Artillery or Engineers, and were assured that the privileges that would have belonged to them if appointed would be guaranteed; that £100 each was subsequently paid them towards their expenses at Addiscombe by the Indian Government, in accordance with one of the conditions under which they had received their cadetships; also that, on joining at Woolwich at Addiscombe early in 1861, 10 of the candidates, including the declarants, who obtained commissions in Her Majesty's Royal Artillery, were assured by Colonel G. Kennedy, then in command of the depôt, that if they would consent to volunteer for general service their privileges under the conditions in the regulations for admission to cadetships at Addiscombe would be preserved to them; will he explain why, in spite of these declarations, they have been retired on pension at English instead of Indian rates, and have been deprived of the benefit which would have accrued to them, had they been appointed to the Indian Army, of counting the year they spent at Addiscombe towards pension; and whether as these cadets were induced to continue their course and accept appointments in Her Majesty's Artillery by assurances officially given to them by two superior officers representing the Crown, the Government now intends to repudiate these assurances?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I can add very little to the replies made to my hon. Friend in 1895, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling District. The salient point in the case is, that these officers never were in the Indian Army, appointments to which had ceased before they came out of Addiscombe. Whatever hopes were held out by the Governor of that college were certainly unauthorised; and they were set aside in advance by the Indian General Order of the 9th December 1859, intimating that "all future appointments of cadets should be made subject to any alteration that may be decided upon."

POLICE RESERVE FORCE, DUBLIN.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the average strength of the Police Reserve Force at the depôt, Dublin, during the last financial year, and what was the cost of same for that year?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The average number of reserve men at the depôt during year ended 31st March 1896, was 262, including head constables; and the cost for that year, as nearly as can be ascertained was £20,190 including the pay of officers.

SCIENCE AND ART CLASSES.

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been directed to Circular Letter No. 314 of the Science and Art Department which purports to explain a paragraph of the Science and Art Directory; whether he is aware that this explanation is contrary to the interpretation which has been generally placed on the regulations contained in the directory by the managers of science classes and evening continuation schools and opposed to the practice generally observed in such schools and classes; and, whether, having regard to the serious loss of grants which will result from the operation of these instructions, he will have the new regulations so modified that while one attendance may not be registered for two grants, yet grants may be made for separate attendance at science and art classes by pupils who are also attending day schools in accordance with the existing practice?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): The object of the circular and the regulation to which it refers is to prevent a double grant being paid—one by the Education Department and the other by the Science and Art Department. No school need come under the regulation during the present year; there is the option of working under the present system of payment by results. The meaning of the circular is that a scholar on the register of a day elementary school cannot be also registered for an attendance grant from the Science and Art Department. It is not intended to apply to evening schools and classes. The whole subject has been referred to a Departmental Committee, which will report to the Committee of Council on the grants of the Science and Art Department and the regulations necessary to prevent their overlapping those of the Education Department.

MR. GRAY asked if as the circular stood it would prevent pupils attending evening classes and also attending science classes from receiving separate grants.

SIR J. GORST said it would not, because during the present financial year the circular would work under the old system of payments by results, and before entering another year the Committee would report and arrangements would be made.

ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL, WILLESDEN.

Mr. J. H. YOXALL (Nottingham): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education if he is aware that at the public elementary school of St. Andrew's, Willesden, two certificated schoolmistresses and an assistant teacher have received notice of dismissal from the chairman of the managers of the school because they decline to sign a memorandum of agreement, by the terms of which they would have been bound to be regular communicants and attendants at the church of St. Andrew's; that an increase of salary was withheld from a certificated assistant master on the ground that he did not attend that particular church, and that finally he was dismissed because he did not so attend; and, will he cause an inquiry to be made into the management of St. Andrew's Public Elementary School, Willesden, with regard to the disposal of the public moneys granted by the State out of which the teachers are paid?

Sir J. GORST: My attention has been called to the statements referred to in the first part of the hon. Member's question, and I have seen them with very great regret. [*Cheers.*] The Committee of Council, however, have no power to interfere in the appointment or dismissal of teachers; and, in the absence of such power, are not prepared to institute the suggested inquiry.

Mr. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any suggestion or remonstrance has been made with these managers, or whether the Committee of Council propose to deal with them in any way for the action they have taken?

Sir J. GORST: No, Sir. The Committee of Council decline to interfere in other people's business. [*Laughter.*]

VACCINATION MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether vaccination medical officers come under the provisions of the Poor Law Superannuation Act of 1896; and, if not, whether he will take steps to amend the Act in this respect?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The Local Government Board are of opinion that neither under the Superannuation Act of 1864, nor under the Act of last Session, is a Public Vaccinator who is paid by fees under a contract, an officer to whom a superannuation could be granted. I am not contemplating any alteration of the law in this respect.

SCHOOL BOARDS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate upon what principle the Scotch Education Department now refuses to continue to pay the additional grant claimed by certain Scotch School Boards in virtue of that part of Section 67 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1872?

*__The LORD ADVOCATE__: I understand the hon. Member's Question to refer to the case of scholars in evening schools. The Scottish Education Department has had the matter under its consideration, and has taken legal opinion. It is advised that in view of the fact that there is now no restriction of age in the case of scholars in evening schools, and as such schools are not part of the accommodation which it is compulsory on School Boards to provide, this attendance cannot be included in reckoning the average attendance in the sense of the section referred to.

LOANS TO TENANTS (IRELAND).

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the charges for interest and repayment of principal on loans to tenants advanced by the Board of Works, Ireland, amount to £7 10s. per cent. per annum; and will he, in view of the straitened circumstances of tenant farmers in Ireland, consider the advisability of extending the period for repayment of those loans, so as to give immediate relief to the occupiers of agricultural holdings without entailing any pecuniary loss on the Treasury?

Mr. HANBURY: Tenants' loans are repayable by an annuity of 6½ per cent. per annum for 22 years (covering interest at about £3 8s. per annum) unless the tenant desires to pay within a shorter period, when he has the option of increasing the amount of the annual instalments to such an amount as will repay the loan in the period selected by him. No loan is granted unless the estimated value of the anticipated improvement to be derived from the works is greater than the annuity. As the hon. Member is aware, the general question of the rate of loans is now under the consideration of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

RAILWAY RATES (IRELAND).

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed on the 25th January by the Oldcastle Board of Guardians, stating that in consequence of the high local tariffs and low preferential through rates Irish Railway Companies are imposing such burdens on Irish commerce as will tend to crush it; and, (2) whether he is prepared to recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the feasibility and desirability of State purchase of Irish Railways, as to work them economically for the benefit of the entire country?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have received a copy of the resolution referred to in the first part of the Question. As regards the second paragraph, it has already been pointed out that the suggested State purchase of railways in Ireland has been considered by two Royal Commissions which sat in 1865 and 1886. I see no reason for the appointment of a third Royal Commission to go over the same ground again after so brief an interval.

FLOODS (COUNTY LONGFORD).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached him of the flooding of all the lowlands on the banks of the tributary streams which flow into the River Shannon from Rooskey, county Roscommon, to Athlone; whether it is the fact that a large volume of water is kept unnecessarily back by the shutting down of the floodgates at Tarmonbarry and also at Athlone; whether such a course is an absolute necessity for navigation purposes; and whether any steps can be taken to so widen and deepen the River Camlin as to prevent the disastrous floods that continually occur in county Longford?

MR. HANBURY: I am informed that every stream in the Shannon district was flooded, and that the flood was about an ordinary winter flood. The Rooskey and Tarmon sluices were all opened. At Tarmon the sluices were not running full, and the surface of the water above the sluices was at or below the summer level. With a view to protecting the low-lying land along the river between Athlone and Meelick, 27 miles, the Athlone sluices were either not opened or only slightly opened, but Lough Rea (above Athlone) did not rise so as to cause much flooding. The navigation was not in any way affected by the sluices, and was not taken into consideration. No works are in contemplation by the Government on the Camlin River, which has its own Local Drainage Board.

BRITISH MUSEUM STAFF.

*MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the staff of the British Museum are the only officials in the State-supported institutions of the Metropolis who are deprived of the Saturday half-holiday all the year round; and, whether it would be possible, by working with a reduced staff or in some other manner satisfactory to the trustees, to make a concession of alternate Saturday afternoons to those hard-working and deserving officials?

MR. HANBURY: I know of no right to a Saturday half-holiday, except that which is allowed by the two Orders in Council of 1890 to the Higher and Second Divisions. That right is confined to alternate Saturdays and is only when the Department is a seven hours' office, and then only on condition that the Head of the Department is satisfied that the state of public business will permit of it. The assistants in the British Museum are only required to attend six hours per diem, so they have not even this contingent claim under the Order in Council. If the hon. Member is referring to the attendants, they have no claim to a half-holiday. Whether it would be possible to do as he suggests is a question not for the Treasury, but for the trustees of the British Museum to decide. I understand that the trustees have already considered the matter, and have decided that it would be impossible, on the ground that Saturday afternoon above all others, is the time when there is generally most pressure, owing to the increased attendance of the public.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY OF IRELAND.

MR. JAMES DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Great Northern Railway of Ireland shunt trains over a level crossing entering the town of Castleblaney, causing delay and danger to the people who use this crossing; and, whether his Department have been able to take any steps during the Recess to induce the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland to erect a bridge over the railway there?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): The Board of Trade have this morning received a letter from the Company, in which it is stated that the Directors have decided to put up a footbridge over this level crossing; and that their engineer has been instructed to communicate with the Town Commissioners at Castleblaney, with a view to coming to an arrangement as to the position of the bridge which will suit all purposes.

MR. DALY asked if the right hon. Gentleman would take into account the fact that the railway company shunted over this level crossing, and that it was only a footbridge they were going to erect?

MR. RITCHIE said he was aware that it was a footbridge the company were going to erect, but he could not give any further answer to the question.

MR. DALY said he would raise the question on the Estimates.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can state when the Bill to deal with the £15,000 voted last year in aid of Congested Districts in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland will be introduced?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I can only tell the hon. Member that no date can as yet be fixed for the introduction of the Bill in question.

TIUMPAN HEAD LIGHTHOUSE (ISLAND OF LEWIS).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now state when the construction of the lighthouse on Tiumpan Head, Island of Lewis, will be commenced?

MR. RITCHIE: Although the Board of Trade have sanctioned the establishment of a light on Tiumpan Head, I am not yet able to say when, having regard to the claims of other works also under consideration, the state of the Mercantile Marine Fund will admit of the work being commenced.

POST OFFICE AMENDMENT ACT, 1895.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, and, if so, when, he proposes to introduce a Bill to extend to Scotland the provisions of the Post Office Amendment Act, 1895?

MR. HANBURY: I hope that I may be able to introduce a Bill this session which will deal with the matter to which the hon. Member refers.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the fact that many of the younger children attending school in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are unable to speak English, the inspectors visiting such schools will be authorised to question the children in Gaelic whenever such a course seems desirable, as is already done in Welsh in the schools of Wales?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I must remind the hon. Member that Article 19 of the Code directs that in districts where Gaelic is spoken the intelligence of the children may be tested by requiring them to explain in Gaelic the meaning of any passage read or recited.

CROFTERS ACT, 1886.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Government propose to bring in a Bill to extend the benefits of the Crofters Act, 1886, to tenants holding under lease in the crofting counties of Scotland at rentals of £30 and under?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: No, Sir; Her Majesty's Government are not convinced that a case can be made out for the alteration of the law suggested in the hon. Member's Question.

SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSIONS (IRELAND.)

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, under existing arrangements, a national teacher in Ireland of the first class, assuming he commences to teach at the age of 18 years, would, after 20 years' service, be entitled to a pension of only £6 a year and that a third-class teacher would' after 30 years' service, be entitled to a pension of only £10 a year; is he aware that the Irish National Teachers' Pension Fund is insolvent through no fault of the teachers but through mistakes made by Government actuaries; and will the fund be placed in a position of solvency by special grant, and without deducting for such purpose any sum from the arrears of school grant due to Ireland under the Education Act of 1892?

MR. HANBURY: The pensions at the two periods would, I understand, be those stated in the Question. In practice the teachers prefer a gratuity to a pension—and they would receive £95 and £116 respectively. English teachers entered since 1862 receive no pension. It is not possible within the limits of an answer to explain the causes which have led to the present condition of the fund, but one important cause is the fact that existing teachers are paying much less than is required to produce one-fourth of the benefits, and have thus materially profited by the error in the original calculation. The steps to be taken to place the fund in a sound position are now engaging the attention of the Government.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it is a fact that an Irish national teacher who commences to teach at the age of 18 years can claim full pension only after a service of 43 to 46 years; is there any other department of the public service in which so long a term of service is required in order to secure full pension; and could he state what are the periods of service after which teachers in elementary schools in Great Britain are permitted to retire on full pension?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand that the teacher described would, if a man, receive full pension at the age of 61, after 43 years' service; and if a woman, at 58, after 40 years' service. The teachers are pensionable under a special code. But I may say it frequently happens in the Civil Service that the full pension is not earned until after more than 40 years' service. I am informed that no teacher in Great Britain who entered since 1862 is entitled to pension, and that the rules under which pensions are given to those who entered before 1862 are so different from the Irish system that no comparison can be instituted; but I believe them to be on the whole not more favourable to the teachers than the Irish system.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that the Roman Catholic and Protestant Managers of National Schools in Ireland and the Teachers Organisation have repeatedly called for the reduction of the average necessary for the employment of assistant teachers, and that the Commissioners of National Education last year, by a unanimous vote, requested the Treasury for sufficient funds to enable them to meet the proposed alteration; (2) whether he will use his influence with the Treasury so as to secure the necessary net grant to meet the views of the Commissioners; and (3) will he recommend that the assistant teachers at present threatened with withdrawal of salary, owing to the refusal of the Treasury to accede to the recommendations of the Board of Education, shall be retained in the pay of the Commissioners pending a settlement of the question?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Representations have been made as stated in the first paragraph of the Question. The Estimates for the coming financial year are now closed, but I shall be prepared again to bring the matter before the Treasury in connection with the Estimates for the year 1898–99 should the Commissioners so desire. As regards the last paragraph, the Commissioners have no power to continue payment to assistant teachers where the conditions of the existing Rules as to the average daily attendance for assistants are not fulfilled.

MR. FLYNN : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that in five-eighths of the number of Irish National Schools at present the staff consists of one recognised teacher only, single teachers being thus responsible in over 5,000 schools for the efficient teaching of eight standards on 40 different part subjects daily ; and (2) whether the Commission of Inquiry respecting the employment of manual labour in National Schools will take into consideration the exceptional circumstances of rural schools in Ireland, and inquire into the educational soundness of making the staff of such schools dependent upon attendance rather than upon the number of classes and subjects taught?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR : There is only one teacher in about five out of eight National Schools, but in a very large number of these schools, where the average daily attendance is sufficient, the teacher is aided by one or two paid monitors. In practice, the individual daily instruction alluded to in the second paragraph is not given, nor is it necessary for the efficient instruction of the classes, and certainly no teacher is held responsible for such an arrangement. The general arrangement is to have certain subjects taught on only two, or perhaps three, days in the week. As regards the third paragraph, the Commission has been appointed to inquire how far and in what form manual and practical instruction should be included in the educational system of the primary schools under the Board of National Education. I am unable to say whether the Commission will consider the Question referred to by the hon. Member as coming within the scope of the reference to them.

INDIAN TROOPS (SCURVY).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if there is any truth in the rumour of scurvy having been prevalent among the Indian troops at Suakin and Tokar last year.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing) : The Indian troops at Suakin were attacked for a short time by a sudden outbreak of scurvy, during which two British officers, 103 men, and 85 followers were admitted to hospital, suffering from this complaint. In about a month—viz., by the beginning of November—it was completely eradicated, and the general officer commanding was able to report that "by the middle of November, so far as the men were concerned, the force was as fit to take the field as it was on its arrival in the country."

TENANTS HOLDINGS (COUNTY MONAGHAN).

MR. DALY : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants in the townlands of Moylemore and Moylebeg, on the estate of Major Leslie, county Monaghan, have applied to the Irish Land Commisioners to purchase the landlord's mortgage on their holdings ; and that the Irish Land Commissioners have replied that the recent Irish Land Act does not give them power to deal with such cases ; and whether he will bring in a Bill this Session to give relief to tenants such as those referred to?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR : The Land Commissioners are unable to trace any such application as is referred to in this Question. I have already replied to the second paragraph of the Question.

DEPORTATION OF PAUPERS TO IRELAND.

MR. DALY : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when he intends introducing the Bill to prevent the deportation of paupers from England and Scotland to Ireland.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR : I have again and again explained that any Bill which would provide a real remedy for the grievance complained of could not emanate from the Irish Office, as it would have to deal with the Poor Law as it now exists in England and Scotland. I am unable, therefore, to answer the question of the hon. Member.

CRETE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether information has reached him that some Christian peasants returning to their villages were attacked near the gate of Canea by an armed band of Mahomedans on the evening of the 26th ultimo, several of them maltreated or wounded, and their mules and baggage taken from them; that great excitement prevails in Canea, and all the shops have been closed; and that some Christians were wounded outside the gates of Heraklion on the 27th ultimo; and whether any representations have been addressed by the representations of the Powers to the Vali of Crete or to the Government of the Porte respecting these alleged attacks upon the persons and properties of Christian subjects?

MR. CURZON: We have not heard of the particular incident at Canea mentioned in the Question. But during the past few weeks there have been frequent alarms in the towns, owing to the immigration of Mussulmans from the country districts, and there have been murders, both of Christians and Mussulmans. The foreign ships of war have produced a calming effect by their presence at the ports, and movement to the threatened quarters. The Turkish authorities appear to be doing their utmost to maintain order and restore confidence, and the foreign Consuls are in close communication with them. The continuance of peace depends largely upon the organisation of the new gendarmerie which is being rapidly proceeded with.

ARMY OFFICERS' UNIFORM.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any allowance will be made to Officers of the Army who have been ordered to provide themselves with the new mess waistcoat and patrol jacket in addition to the new sword hilts of last year; when the new helmet is to be taken into use; and why Officers are put to such expense in the matter of uniform?

*MR. BRODRICK: No change has been made in the mess waistcoat, but a less expensive mess jacket and patrol jacket have been introduced for infantry officers, and ample time has been allowed for those now in use to be worn out. As the object of the change has been to make officers' uniforms more serviceable and less expensive, and as the change is known to have been very generally desired by the officers concerned, no necessity for compensation is likely to arise. No decision has yet been come to as to the introduction of a helmet of a new pattern.

NETLEY HOSPITAL (ASSESSMENT).

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) whether it is a fact that since the year 1876 the Government has paid on an assessment of £3,385 on Netley Hospital; (2) whether this sum represents about one-fourth the estimated annual value; and (3) whether he will consider the desirability of having a new valuation made of Netley Hospital?

MR. HANBURY: The answer to the first paragraph is, Yes. The Local Assessment Committee accepted this valuation as satisfactory in 1876, and have never asked for a revision until last July. The Treasury at once expressed their readiness to make a new valuation, and on July 18th, and again on January 18th, asked for information from the Assessment Committee which has not yet been supplied to them.

EQUIVALENT GRANT (SCOTLAND).

MR. WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government are prepared to give an assurance that an equivalent grant will be given to Scotland in proportion to the sum proposed to be given to the Voluntary Schools in England?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): We do not think, as was stated last year, that the system of "equivalent grants" is properly applicable to the matter dealt with in my right hon. Friend's Bill; but should this Bill become law, no doubt fair aid will be given to primary education in Scotland, in such manner as may be suitable to the educational requirements of the country.

MR. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen, S): May I ask upon what basis that aid will be calculated, or when the right hon. Gentleman will be able to make a statement on the subject?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I imagine any proposals of the kind could not be introduced until it was seen what the result may be of the Bill which my right hon. Friend introduced last night. ["Hear, hear!"]

IRISH MAILS.

MR. J. L. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it was with the consent of the Post Office authorities that the time of departure of the Irish day mail train was altered from 7.30 a.m. to 7.15, in order to allow a Scotch connection to be made; whether, since the establishment of the Irish mail service in 1860, the day and night trains to and from London have been run at the same rate of speed; whether, under the proposed new time table, the day mail service is to be run at a slower speed than the night train; and, whether he will endeavour to have the day service run at the same speed as the proposed accelerated night service, and thus convenience the public by an hour's later start at Euston and Dublin respectively?

MR. HANBURY: The dispatch of the Irish day mail train from Euston was altered from 7.30 a.m. to 7.15 a.m. in 1867, but it was not until 1872 that the Irish train was utilised for the conveyance of the Scotch bags. It is the case that the Irish day and night trains have since 1860 been run at practically the same rate of speed. Under the new time table the acceleration of the trains will be confined to the night mail. The acceleration of the day mail trains would be attended with considerable additional expense, which the advantage to the mail service is not held to justify. The convenience of half-an-hour's later start from Dublin has been conceded to passengers under the new time table, but in regard to the dispatch from London the postal advantage is entirely on the side of maintaining the present dispatch of 7.15 a.m.

ARBITRATION TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay upon the Table of this House the text of the Arbitration Treaty between this country and the United States as recently signed?

MR. CURZON: If the hon. Member will put a Motion upon the Paper for the production of the Treaty, Her Majesty's Government will have no objection to lay it on the Table.

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received any and, if so, what representations on the subject of the new Order for the election of parish councils, which deprives one elector of the right to demand a poll for the election of parish councillors, and orders that a poll cannot be taken unless the chairman assents, or it is demanded by five electors present at the meeting, or by one-third of those present, whichever number is least?

MR. CHAPLIN: I have received no representation since the Order referred to was issued, adverse to the course which has been adopted in this matter.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman apart from representations, whether he has considered if this Order does not contravene the words of the Statute, inasmuch as it takes away from the electors the power to demand a poll on a question of expense?

MR. CHAPLIN: I think, Sir, the Order is strictly carried out.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (IRELAND).

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, (1) whether his attention has been called to the circumstance that English steam trawlers have been habitually fishing within the prescribed limits on the coast of the county Down; that some weeks ago three of them were arrested by the coastguard off St. John's Point, prosecuted, and fined the maximum penalty at the Castlewellan Petty Sessions, an amount for which one night's fishing amply recoups them; that the coastguard, though successful in this instance, can rarely catch the offenders, who are able to steam away from their sailing or rowing boats; and (2) whether under these circumstances, he will appeal to the Admiralty to assist in preventing the destruction of the spawning grounds and the ruin of the fishery; or, if that department is unwilling to undertake that duty, he will consider the propriety of organising a water police supplied with steam launches to protect this very important Irish industry?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The facts are substantially as stated in the first paragraph, though I am unable to ascertain what was the value of one night's fishing. On many occasions the coastguard could not come up with the steam trawlers. The question of providing a gunboat for the purpose of preventing illegal fishing by the steam trawlers, and of protecting the fisheries is now under the consideration of Government.

CHITRAL CAMPAIGN MEDAL.

MR. ARTHUR BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that considerable disappointment prevails at the delay in issuing a medal for the Chitral campaign; whether he can explain the cause of this delay; and whether the Secretary of State for War will make some representation in the proper quarter with a view to hastening the issue of this medal?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I greatly regret any disappointment caused by the delay in issuing the Chitral medal. The delay is practically due to a proposal from the Government of India, that in place of a clasp being added to the existing frontier medal an altogether new medal should be struck and issued to note the services of this very successful expedition. This involved the selection and execution of a design—a necessarily lengthy process. The dies were sent to India on January 1st, and I presume the medals are now being struck.

HULME CAVALRY BARRACKS (MANCHESTER).

MR. W. S. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any decision has yet been arrived at by the Military authorities with regard to the Hulme Cavalry Barracks; what troops are now occupying the said barracks; how long such troops have been there; and whether it is intended to make any immediate change with regard to cavalry barracks being occupied by infantry soldiers?

***MR. BRODRICK**: The Hulme Barracks are at present occupied by infantry, who have been there since the autumn. No immediate change is contemplated.

LORD PENRHYN'S QUARRIES.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a letter signed "George Rowley," in *The North Wales Observer and Express*, of 8th January, 1897, in which he states, with reference to his appointment as Local Labour Correspondent to the Board of Trade, that his duty as correspondent was to obtain all information possible from the locality from secretaries of associations, etc., and forward them to the Board of Trade; that he received his appointment through the recommendation of several Welsh Members, well-known Radicals; that on labour questions he had been a trade unionist all his life, taken a leading part for more than twenty years, and had had a large experience of strikes of all kinds; that he was President of the Miners' Federation for some years; and only the other day was Chairman of a Welsh meeting at Cefnmawr for the purpose of raising subscriptions on behalf of the Bethesda men; and, whether the writer of this letter was specially instructed by the Board of Trade to visit Bethesda for the purpose of making inquiries as to the dispute at the Penrhyn

Quarries, and his report thereupon received previous to the Department openly intervening in the matter?

MR. RITCHIE: I have just seen the letter, and assuming it to be as printed, it is a highly improper letter, and Mr. Rowley's explanation has been called for. Local correspondents are not permanent officials of the Board of Trade but persons able to supply information with regard to employment, and their reports are considered along with information obtained from other sources. The statement in the letter as quoted with regard to the mode in which the selection of Mr. Rowley was made is incorrect. When the Board of Trade first became aware of the prospect of a serious dispute in the Bethesda Quarries, they instructed Mr. Rowley in the ordinary course to supply them with information as to the facts, and a report was received from him under the date of September 15th. I think it would be satisfactory that I should read it to the House. It is as follows:—

"As instructed, I have visited the quarry district of Bethesda for the purpose of making inquiries as to the dispute in progress at the Penrhyn quarries I find that Lord Penrhyn is at present investigating the alleged grievances, and is in communication with the leaders of the men with a view to an amicable arrangement. The men continue working, but much anxiety exists in the locality owing to the decided inclination of the men to strike. Feeling runs so high that the slightest hitch in the proceedings will bring the men out. Every effort is being made by the committee and leaders to counteract this. It is thought that by Lord Penrhyn personally investigating the grievances matters will be put right. Public sympathy in the locality is with the men. They say that the wages earned in some instances by good practical quarrymen are much lower than what has been reported, only that the men do not care to come forward. Great dissatisfaction is expressed at the way in which contracts are let to non-practical persons, to the exclusion of the men who have been apprenticed to and worked at the trade all their lives. The quarry is worked in ponks or galleries of 100 or 150 yards in length, in which the quantity of rubbish and quality of the slate varies. The most unprofitable parts are sublet to the men who have not been fortunate in securing a gallery, and this, as a matter of course, places them at a great disadvantage; and these are the men who are seeking a *minimum* day's wage, or a more equal distribution of the advantages with the disadvantages. This information I received from different individuals in the neighbourhood of the quarries. I passed through the quarry as an ordinary visitor during the dinner hour, and I saw several meetings of the men here and there discussing the situation. The decision of Lord Penrhyn is anxiously awaited."

It is true that I interposed during the speech of my right hon. Friend the member for Thanet on Thursday last, owing to the repetition by him of an allegation which had been previously made by my hon. Friend the member for Macclesfield to the effect that the Board of Trade had been guided during their negotiations with Lord Penrhyn by information derived from the local correspondent of the Board of Trade. This allegation I then denied. This denial I emphatically repeat. I stated that no communication had been received from the local correspondent during the time of the negotiations. This statement is strictly accurate, but on the following day I ascertained that under the date of September 18th, prior to the commencement of negotiations and nearly a fortnight before the date of letter No. 1 in the published correspondence, which was the first letter asking for the Board's intervention, a communication had been received from the local correspondent. It was of no importance, and contained no advice to the Board, and no opinion whatever on the merits of the case. This communication had entirely escaped my recollection, and I at once ordered a copy of it to be sent to may right hon Friend, as I wished to be perfectly frank with him. ["Hear, hear!"] No further communication was held on the subject with the labour correspondent. In fact any such further communication with him was forbidden. No advice was asked. No advice was given, nor was anyconcealment attempted. On the contrary, Mr. Rowley's report was shown to Lord Penrhyn by Lord Dudley when he saw him at Penrhyn Castle, so that all along Lord Penrhyn had been in full possession of the communication referred to. ["Hear. hear!"]

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the report which he has read was in reply to a special request addressed to this person to go and make enquiries?

MR. RITCHIE: It was a request made in the ordinary course of business. It is the duty of the Board of Trade to make themselves acquainted with all labour movements, and, in accordance with the usual practice, when it was seen in the newspapers that a dispute had occurred which was likely to end in a strike, the local correspondent was asked to furnish the Board, not with any opinion of his own, but with information as to the facts connected with the matter. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Lord Penrhyn was at liberty to disclose the letter which he has just read, or whether it was shown him by Lord Dudley strictly under the seal of confidence?

MR. RITCHIE: Strictly in confidence.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT had the following Question on Paper:—

"To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention had been called to a report in *The Westminster Gazette* of last Friday, of an alleged interview with Sir Courtenay Boyle, in the course of which Sir Courtenay Boyle is represented as having stated that he had himself received a letter upon the subject of the dispute at the Penrhyn Slate Quarries from a local labour correspondent of the Board of Trade; whether, inasmuch as this letter was an official communication from Mr. George Rowley, dated 17th December 1896, stating that, as instructed, he had visited the quarry district of Bethesda for the purpose of making inquiries as to the dispute in progress at the Penrhyn Quarry, which letter was minuted and initialed by the principal officials of the Board of Trade, including the President himself, he will now qualify the official statement that there was no communication whatever between that correspondent and the Board of Trade, the President, or any one connected with the Board of Trade in connection with this dispute during any time of the negotiations, and no communication was received nor invited from this gentleman with regard to the dispute in the Penrhyn Quarries; and, will he explain to the House the apparent discrepancies between the statements of Sir Courtenay Boyle and himself?"

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question which stands in the name of the hon. Member for Macclesfield is irregular and ought not to appear on the Paper, because it refers to a previous Debate in this House, and questions a statement there made. But as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in answering a question of the right hon. Member for Thanet, did give a kind of anticipatory answer to the question of the hon. Member for Macclesfield, and went with great detail into what has taken place with reference to that Debate, I think it only fair that the hon. Member should be allowed to put his Question or ask the right hon. Gentleman any further question.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he adheres to the statement that no communication was received or invited from this gentleman with regard "to the dispute in the Penrhyn quarries. We heard nothing from him and we made no inquiry."

MR. RITCHIE: I hardly think it is necessary for me to make any further statement. I would point out to my hon. Friend that I have already said in this House that this communication, occurring as it did, prior to the opening of the negotiations, had escaped my memory. It is quite clear that in answering the question of my hon. Friend I was dealing with the period during which these negotiations had been going on, which period was closely within my recollection. In the question my hon. Friend now puts he asks whether my attention has been called to the report

"in the *Westminster Gazette* of last Friday of an alleged interview with Sir Courtenay Boyle, in the course of which Sir Courtenay Boyle is represented as having stated that he had himself received a letter upon the subject of the dispute at the Penrhyn slate quarries."

Oh, no; that is not the point.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: But I should like an answer to that.

MR. RITCHIE: I am asked by Sir Courtenay Boyle to say that the account, which was published without his authority, differs totally from what really occurred, and that he made no such statements as those attributed to him. Going back to the point about which my hon. Friend asked me, namely, whether I

"will now qualify the official statement that there was no communication whatever between that correspondent and the Board of Trade, the President, or anyone connected with the Board of Trade in connection with this dispute during any time of the negotiations,"

that was the statement I made. If I had recollected that there was this prior communication I should, of course, have stated so. I did not recollect it, because it was not within the area of the time of the negotiations, and anyone who heard me, in the Debate, use the expression I did, must have known that I was dealing with the time during which the negotiations took place. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is in accordance with the official practice for permanent officials to make statements or speeches for publication?

Mr. RITCHIE: I confess I did not see the statement which was published in the *Westminster Gazette.* Sir Courtenay Boyle sent it to me on Friday night. When I saw him subsequently, he stated that someone from the *Westminster Gazette* came with a view of asking him one or two questions in regard to the correspondence which had been published, and that he answered those questions without the slighest idea that he was being interviewed. [*Laughter*]. I am afraid he showed a guileless simplicity which one would have hardly suspected. [*Laughter*]. But I can quite understand how it arose. Some information was asked as to the correspondence that had been published. Sir Courtenay Boyle answered with a view of making some points clear, but he had no idea of being interviewed. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman recommend his officials to exercise greater caution in the future?

[No answer was given].

NECESSITOUS SCHOOL BOARDS.

Mr. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education when a Supplementary Estimate will be presented to provide, during the current financial year, for the hitherto unclaimed or unpaid grants to necessitous School Boards, under Section 97 of The Elementary Education Act 1870, for which provision was not made in the Education Votes passed last Session; and what the amount so proprovided in the Supplementary Estimate for this purpose will be?

Sir J. GORST: The Supplementary Estimate which the Committee of Council will shortly submit to the Treasury for presentation to this House will include a sum of nearly £20,000 for paying such claims referred to as are admissible.

FINNER RIFLE RANGE (COUNTY DONEGAL).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that on the piece of land recently taken by the War Office for the construction of a rifle range at Finner, county Donegal, a cairn of great antiquity, which is held in great veneration by the people of the district, and is believed to contain the ashes of some Irish chiefs, is being demolished and the material used in the construction of the range; and whether, as this cairn stands on the highest part of the land and would not in any way interfere with its use, and as the necessary material can be got elsewhere in the neighbourhood, he will instruct the military authorities to stop further demolition of the cairn?

*Mr. BRODRICK: Inquiries are necessary before I can answer this question fully. Meanwhile, orders have been telegraphed to stop any destruction of the cairn if it is going on.

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the nature of the Report furnished at the close of the inquiry into the condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund, if he can state what steps are in contemplation for the redress of the grievances of the lighthouse keepers of the United Kingdom; and whether, since petitions have been repeatedly forwarded by English and Scotch lighthouse keepers to their respective Boards, and the Irish petition has remained for two years unacknowledged, he will promise to grant a Commission of some kind to inquire into these grievances and to examine witnesses from each branch of the service?

Mr. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade have quite recently received applications from the Trinity House and the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses for improvement in the present pay and the prospective pensions of lightkeepers in their service. These applications are both under consideration. No application has as yet been received from the Commissioners of Irish Lights with regard to the same matter. If any is received it will be duly considered, but the Board of Trade have no power to act without such application.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked when it was likely that action would be taken in the direction of dealing with the lighthouse keepers?

MR. RITCHIE: I have stated that the applications have only quite recently been received. There will be no delay in considering them.

OATHS ACT (SCOTTISH FORM).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been drawn to the report of an inquest, held at West Bromwich on the 27th January before Mr. Betham, deputy coroner, from which it appears that a surgeon, being called to give evidence, desired to be sworn according to the Scottish form, whereupon the deputy coroner professed his ignorance of the Scottish oath and stated that he was not bound to administer the oath in that form; whether, under the provisions of the Oaths Act 1888, the administration of the oath in the Scottish form was imperative upon the court in the circumstances stated; and if so, whether, he would communicate with the Lord Chancellor, with a view to the attention of coroners and county court judges being called to the matter; and, whether, having regard to the strong representations of the medical faculty as to the danger of infection from "kissing the book," he will consider the advisability of extending generally the practice of the Lambeth County Court namely to place printed notices in a conspicuous position in the courts calling public attention to the provisions of the Act which permit the Scottish form of oath as an alternative.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In answer to the hon. and learned Member's question, I am informed by the deputy coroner that he did not state that he was not bound to administer the oath in Scotch form. On the contrary, he was prepared to accept it if the witness could remember the form of it; the deputy coroner not then having the form by him. The witness was not required to kiss the book; his unsworn evidence being accepted. Under the provisions of the Oaths Act 1888, the administration of the oath in Scotch form is to be permitted if it is desired by the witness, and a circular has been issued by the Home Office calling the special attention of coroners and deputy coroners to these provisions; and I shall be pleased to show the hon and learned Member a copy of it if he desires to see it.

ROYAL PATRIOTIC FUND.

MR. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the attention of the Government has been directed to the Report and Recommendations of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the administrations of the various funds controlled by the Commissioners of the Royal Patriotic Fund, which has reported that there is immediately available from the total assets recently valued at £1,086,000 for the further relief of widows, children, and dependent relatives of soldiers, sailors, and marines who have lost their lives in the service of the Crown, a surplus approximating half a million sterling; and whether any steps have been taken for the prompt issue of a Supplementary Commission, under Clause 4 of the Patriotic Act of 1881, to deal with such surplus funds which have accrued and may hereafter accrue as recommended by the Committee?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The recommendations of the Committee are under the consideration of the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty. I cannot find in the Report to which the hon. Member refers any statement that there is immediately available a surplus approximating half a million sterling, nor would, I am informed, such a statement be in accordance with the fact.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

*MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether recent local legislation affecting the aborigines of Western Australia has been vetoed by Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether there is any objection to stating the grounds on which the Imperial veto has been exercised in this instance?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): No recent legislation affecting the aborigines of Western Australia has been vetoed. A new Bill was passed by the Legislature of that colony in 1894, to repeal Section 70 of the Constitution Act, which appropriates 1 per cent. of the colonial revenue for the use of the Aborigines Protection Board. This Measure was reserved by the Acting Governor, and has not yet been assented to. Considerable correspondence has passed with the colonial Government, which is now in the hands of the printer, and will, I trust, shortly be ready for presentation.

EDUCATION GRANT (SCOTLAND).

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the proposed repeal of so much of Section 19 of the Education Act 1876, as imposes a limit on the Parliamentary grant to day schools is intended to carry with it the repeal of Section 53, which applies the same conditions to Scotland?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Bill does not refer to Scotland, and does not touch the question of the 17s. 6d. limit in respect to Scotland.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked whether the First Lord of the Treasury could now inform the House when he would be in a position to lay upon the Table the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on Financial Relations which he had promised to submit to Parliament at any early date?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The references to Royal Commissions are not usually laid upon the Table, but I shall be prepared next week in answer to a question to give the terms of reference to this Commission.

THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY announced that the business in Committee of Supply on Friday would be the consideration of the grant in aid in connection with the Egyptian Expedition.

*SIR C. DILKE: Which will come first—the grant in aid for the Indian troops or the grant of £500,000?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The grant to the Egyptian Government.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.).

PRECEDENCE FOR THE EDUCATION RESOLUTION.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport) asked whether, supposing the Debate on the financial Resolution went over that day, he was able to undertake that the Government would not take to-morrow.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I really am unable to entertain the hypothesis for a moment. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, rising again, moved:—

> "That the order for the Committee on 'Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant, Etc.)' have precedence this day of the notices of motion and other Orders of the Day."

He thought this was a motion that would need no justification from him. [*Opposition cries of "Oh."*] He much regretted that his hon. Friend who, by the fortune of the ballot, was the happy possessor of the first place that day, should be disappointed by the proposal to take the time for Government business. But it must be remembered that they were, after all, only discussing what was commonly regarded and what ought to be regarded as a purely formal stage in the procedure of bringing in a Bill, and which was quite independent of the discussions on the Second Reading and Committee stages of the Bill. In addition to the opportunity now afforded there would be an opportunity for some discussion on the Report of the Resolution. In the circumstances they ought not to delay long coming to a conclusion upon this, the first Parliamentary stage in the discussion of the Education Measure. ["Hear, hear."]

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Notts, Rushcliffe) thought the motion did require further justification than the right hon. Gentleman had vouchsafed. It was, in his opinion, both as regards the manner in which it had been brought forward and the period of the Session, most unusual, and he might almost say unprecedented. Mr. Speaker Shaw Lefevre said the Standing Orders ought to be so framed as to give reasonable certainty to their proceedings and prevent Members from being confronted with surprises. But there was a great element of surprise about this motion. It was not until midnight last night that the First Lord of the Treasury announced that he would make this Motion to interfere with the Standing Orders. He admitted that the Standing Orders as they stood at the beginning of the Session did not give the Government sufficient time. But that had been largely remedied by the new Sessional order relating to Supply, and the merit of that new Sessional order lay in its certainty. A great part of the unnecessary weariness experienced in the House arose from the element of uncertainty in their procedure. They all knew the farce that went on at the beginning of the Session of a number of Members bringing in Bills which everybody knew in the great majority of cases would never go any further. Much of their time was undoubtedly wasted owing to the element of uncertainty. [*Cheers.*] If the Rules of the House were so altered that they could know beforehand what was coming on and the time it would take they would leave at the end of the Session with a better conscience as to the work they had done. Many hon. Members were engaged in important affairs outside and could not come every day. It would be an evil day when the House did not contain men in contact with the great philanthropic, social, industrial, and commercial currents which made up our national life. Their advice as experts was very important, and it was most inconvenient to them that the business of the House should be altered at short notice as it often was. If a return were made of the telegrams which the Party Whips had to dispatch, often at a moment's notice, to bring Members up from the country it would be an object lesson in the uncertainty of their proceedings. ["Hear, hear."] The Leader of the House gave away the whole case last night in regard to his Motion when he said there was no particular reason the Bill should be passed by a particular date.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: But there is the strongest reason why it should be through by an early date.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: But the "time limit" had vanished. Why, therefore, make this raid on the Standing Orders and the rights of Members? He emphatically protested against this Motion, because it contained the element of uncertainty with which they were already too familiar, it was unfair to hon. Members who had Motions on the Paper, and there was no necessity for it. (*Cheers.*)

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that when a Minister took away a day he should make it clear that he was justified in doing so, in the interests not only of the Government but of the business of the House. He agreed that when the principal Bill of the Session was before the House it should be discussed *de die in diem.* The Leader of the House had said he could not contemplate the hypothesis of the Debate lasting over that night. But he would make that hypothesis impossible by moving the clause. That evening there was a most important question with regard to Peers. On the Radical side of the House they took the deepest interest in Peers. [*Laughter.*] Yet the Leader of the House waved the subject away as though absolutely nothing. Private Members ought not to lose their days through the idiosyncrasies of a Minister. If the Debate did not finish that night, would it go on *de die in diem*?

MR. EDWIN LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro) said there was no hurry for the Education Resolution, and he protested against being deprived of bringing on a subject which excited the greatest interest amongst his constituents.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I have on many occasions, from the front Bench, on whichever side of the House I have sat, supported Motions for taking away days, under certain conditions, from private Members; and as the Member for Truro has said, if the question before the House had been an urgent matter on which it was necessary at the earliest opportunity to come to a decision, I think I should again have supported the Government. But it is perfectly obvious that that is not the case. It was fully explained last night that this was to be a permanent Measure which is by its magnitude ultimately to compensate people for their present disappointments. I think that was the light in which the right hon. Gentleman put it. At midnight last night, he said he would much rather to-day be discussing the questions now on the Paper in regular order than he would be discussing the Education Bill. After the Debate of last night, I am not surprised at that statement. [*Opposition cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman said the Debate had produced upon him a sense of nausea—[*laughter*]—that there been had a repetition of arguments *ad nauseam*, and he added that there were very important Motions on the Paper for the consideration of the House to-day. It is quite true. There is a very interesting Motion by the hon. Member for Sheffield. It is a Motion of great importance which affects the whole finance of the country. It proposed to put a 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty upon all manufactures—[*laughter*]—and a 5 per cent. duty upon all partly manufactured goods. Well, Sir, that is a large order. [*Laughter.*] We should have been extremely glad to know the opinions of the Gentlemen opposite upon it, and the decision of the Government. I quite agree with the First Lord of the Treasury that it would have been of the deepest interest to discuss a question of that kind, especially as out of the proceeds it is proposed to finally provide for old-age pensions. No doubt the Resolution will command the support of the Colonial Secretary. [*Laughter.*] As the Education Bill, in its present form, is not urgent, it would be a pity to lose so interesting a discussion. The First Lord of the Treasury had deprecated prolonged discussion on this stage of the Financial Resolution, but the right hon. Gentleman opened the whole policy of the Bill on the Resolution, and it was upon the Resolution that we discussed the Bill on Monday night and will continue to discuss it. It is extremely important that the country should have time to form an opinion on this Bill. Probably there is no subject in which the country at large is more deeply interested than this question of education, or which it more thoroughly understands, and before we divide on the Resolution in Committee of Supply, which is practically speaking hereafter to shut out the question of the Board Schools, ought not the country to have an opportunity of knowing what we are doing here? It is not as if this Resolution, as in the case of most Resolutions in Committee, had no final or ulterior operation. I am not charging the Government with any evil design in the form of the Resolution. But no one can deny that when this Resolution is passed the effect will be to exclude this House from considering the claims put forward on their behalf. I must protest against any attempt, therefore, to force through the House a resolution of that character without giving ample time to the country to know what is the policy of the Government in this respect. The country also should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion as to a scheme of education which in its present form excludes the Board Schools of the country from any share of the public money which is to be voted by the Bill. When it is proposed, therefore, to displace the only business of the House and that almost on the threshold of the Session, for the purpose of hurrying on a scheme which ought not to be hurried on, I say that the scheme ought to be amply considered both in the House and out of it before we have reached the conclusive stage. I think that is the strongest reason why we ought not to take resolutions with an unusual dispatch which will exclude the entire question from debate. But, in addition to the House and the country, there is another body who ought to be glad of a little leisure to reflect on this Bill, and that is the Government itself. [*Cheers.*] I heard in the House last night warning voices addressed to the Government from their supporters behind, and I have seen in the Press this morning still stronger warnings from their best friends. Why then should not the Government take a day or two to think whether or not they were pressing their scheme on the country in a form which will be acceptable to it? I think, in the circumstances of this case, and especially of a case which requires leisure and reflection and which demands no immediate decision, that it is most unwise to disturb the present arrangements of the House, and therefore I shall vote against the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman, following the lead of my hon. Friend the Member for the Truro Division, has stated that his reason for objecting to the Motion is that there is no reason for proceeding rapidly with the Bill. I dissent entirely from that. [*Cheers.*] I dissent from it on two distinct grounds. I dissent from it partly on a ground which the House will understand when it sees the printed Bill, that it is very important in the interests of the Voluntary Schools that the Measure should become law at the earliest possible date. [*Cheers.*] I dissent from the statement in the second place, on the ground that it must be manifest to everyone that if an inordinate length of time is occupied by the discussion of the relief to be given to Voluntary Schools, it will be impossible to find time for the other scheme dealing with necessitous Board Schools. [*Ironical laughter and cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think that the Government had hastily adopted unexpected policy in thus separating the discussion of Voluntary Schools from other questions connected with education. I have stated that was the policy of the Government two or three times at least in the most formal and explicit manner in public, and in a mode which any hon. Member might understand. That being so, it is manifest, if the House is really seriously desirous that we should take up the second branch of relief to which I have referred, it is not a wise suggestion that we should spend days in meditating on this Bill and in wasting time which ought to be occupied in getting on with it. I hope hon. Gentlemen who are desirous to relieve Voluntary Schools or Board Schools will assist the Government by their vote and speech—and sometimes by the absence of their speeches [*cheers and laughter*]—to get this Bill through as soon as possible. I shall never be a party to the dilatory proceedings which the right hon. Gentleman appears to sanction by his speech, and which he is going to sanction by his vote. [*Cheers*].

MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester), who spoke amid loud cries of "Divide," said that if hon. Gentlemen opposite had the same experience of the necessity for more piers and harbours as the hon. Member for Truro they would attach considerable importance to the Motion. The lives of thousands of their fellow countrymen were involved in the consideration of the hon. Member's Motion; and if there was no great urgency for the Education Bill, the right hon. Gentleman should allow one night, at any rate, to be devoted to the safety of our fishing and sea-going population. ["Hear, hear!"] If the request was not granted, however, he hoped that these people would note that they had been deprived of their opportunity by the Government in order to hasten on the work of dipping hands into the public purse to satisfy their clerical supporters. ["Oh, oh!" *and cheers.*] He invited the Leader of the House to withdraw the proposal of a grant for Voluntary Schools, and to associate necessitous Board Schools with them in one Resolution. If this were done, a great deal of support would be obtained from the Opposition Benches. It was nothing short of monstrous that the right hon. Gentleman should make this Motion in the first fortnight of the Session, and he suggested the right hon. Gentleman should give an assurance that if the Resolution was passed that evening he would continue the Education Debate to-morrow. He was grieved to find also that the House had sat until nearly 1 o'clock the previous morning. If some Members of the Opposition supported the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, would he give a definite pledge that the House should not in any circumstances be kept sitting after midnight? [*Laughter and* "Oh, oh!"] After 12 or half-past 12 o'clock a considerable number of Members could not take part in the business of the House because it was next to impossible for them to reach their homes after that hour. If the right hon. Gentleman would accept this offer he should consider whether it would not be his duty to stay his opposition to the Motion. [Cries of "Divide."]

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) recalled the words of the Leader of the House last Friday, when he said "he could not promise to take no Tuesday before Whitsuntide, but he would be glad to preserve any reasonable number of Tuesdays," and said that here the right hon. Gentleman was nevertheless taking the first private Members' Tuesday of the Session. In view of the opposition on their own side of the House to their education scheme, and the figures of the Romford poll, the Government would do wisely to take time to reconsider their extraordinary position.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) rose to address the House amid renewed cries of "Divide," when

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."—The House divided :—Ayes, 259; Noes, 143.—(Division List—No. 10—appended.)

AYES.

Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Captain
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Carew, James Laurence
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Hereford)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lancs. SW.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh

Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledow, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'y)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hall, Sir Charles
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)

Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swnsea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool.)
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, Mj.-Gen (Antr'm N)
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Henry Hananel
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pender, James
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strauss, Arthur
Strut, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Un.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R. E. (I. of W.)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arch, Joseph
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmot
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daley, James
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees (Pembrokesh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir Hy. (Wol'tn)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Hogan, James Francis
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McEwan, William
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Morgan, Rt. Hn. Sir G. O. (Denbs.)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Kelly, James
Oldroyd, Mark
O'Malley, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B)
Sheehy, David
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E)

Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Wayman, Thomas
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsfld)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur.

Question put accordingly:—The House divided—Ayes, 283; Noes, 123—(Division List—No. 11—appended.)

AYES.

Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man.)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barnes, Frederick Gorell
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Captain
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Carew, James Lawrence
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lanc.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt. G. N. (Lanc. S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Daly, James
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Dillon, John
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledow, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man.)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H. (City of Lon.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilhooly, James
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'y)
Gretton, John
Hall, Sir Charles
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edward Brodie (Hamps.)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kilbride, Denis
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool.)
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macaleese, Daniel

Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McCalmont,Mj.-Gen.(Ant'm.N)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Henry Hananel
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Muntz, Philip A.
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt.Hn.A.Graham(Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Malley, William
O'Niell, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pender, James
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley,Rt.Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie,Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, Hon.James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Lord, E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, SirR.E.(Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams,Joseph Powell-(Brm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt.Hon.Hon.A.H.Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Arch, Joseph
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionetsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. Glamorgan)
Evans, SirFrancisH.(South'ton)
Farquaharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler,Rt.Hn.SirHenry(Wl'tn)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gull, Sir Cameron
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick,Thomas Charles H.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones,William,(Carnarvonsh're)
Kay-Shuttleworth,Rt.Hon.Sr.U
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch,Sir JohnGeorgeSmythe
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'ld.)
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
McArthur, William
McEwan, William
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W.(Yorks.)
Morgan,Rt.Hn.Sir G.O.(Denbs.)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt.Hn.John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Mundella,Rt.Hn. AnthonyJohn
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Kelly, James
Oldroyd, Mark
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton

Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Seton-Karr, Henry
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Wayman, Thomas
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse Sir J. T. (Hud'rsfld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. John Ellis and Sir Robert Reid.

Ordered, that the Order for the Committee on "Voluntary Schools [Aid Grant, Etc.]" have precedence this day of the Notices of Motions and other Orders of the day.

MOTIONS.

CROFTER'S HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Weir, Dr. Clark, Mr. McLeod, Sir Leonard Lyell, and Sir William Wedderburn; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 109.]

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY).

Bill to provide that all Shop Assistants shall have one Half-Holiday in each week, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Duncombe, Mr. MacNeill, Colonel Dalbiac, Mr. Atherley Jones, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Harry Samuel; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time To-morrow, and to be printed.—[Bill 110.]

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the existing Laws in Ireland relating to County Surveyors' Superannuation, and other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. William Johnston, Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. Hayden, Colonel Waring, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Dane, and Colonel McCalmont; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday, 12th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 111.]

INJURIES TO WORKMEN (EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY.

Bill to make better provision for Workmen injured in the course of their employment, ordered to be brought in by Sir Arthur Forwood, Mr. Warr, Mr. Tomlinson, and Sir Edward Hill; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 16th February, and to be printed.—[Bill 112.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.)

Considered in Committee:—

[THE CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair].

Question again proposed,

"That it is expedient—(*a*) to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an aid grant to Voluntary Schools, not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools;

"(*b*) To repeal as regards day schools so much of section nineteen of The Elementary Education Act, 1876, as imposes a limit on the parliamentary grant to Elementary Schools in England and Wales; and

"(*c*) to make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools."—(*First Lord of the Treasury.*)

Debate resumed.

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.), whose speech was interrupted on Monday night by the operation of the 12 o'clock rule, said he had ventured to express to the Committee on the previous night, the great disappointment felt by the friends of the Voluntary Schools at finding that the Bill to be based upon this Resolution would not come into operation by the end of March. He was sure the disappointment felt in the House at that statement of the First Lord of the Treasury was experienced perhaps in a more acute form by persons interested in the Voluntary Schools throughout the country. It was certainly reflected very widely in the Press that morning. But the best thing the friends of the Voluntary Schools could now do was to hasten, as far as they could, the passing of this Measure; and if he assumed that Ministerial difficulties stood in the way of the Bill getting through before the end of March, he thought he should not be far wrong. In regretting that a scheme for giving relief to the ratepayers of the poorer School Board districts did not form part of the proposed Bill, he was conveying to the House the views of his constituents. He hoped he was not wrong in assuming, after the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, which was made in more definite language that afternoon, coupled with statements the right hon. Gentleman had made himself a few days ago, that a Bill dealing with the question of the poorer School Board districts would be introduced by the Government this Session. If that were clearly understood it would tend to facilitate the passage of the Resolution through the Committee and the subsequent Bill through Parliament. Justified, as they believed they were, by the wording of Section 4 of the Bill of last year, many hon. Members on the Government side of the House, had, during the Recess, given definite pledges to their constituents that they would support the introduction of a scheme dealing with poor School Board districts, and it was a bitter disappointment to them that they were unable to give a complete fulfilment of those pledges now. But he thought he was right in assuming that the Bill would come at an early date and therefore on that point he would say nothing further. The next question was the consideration of the Resolution now before the Committee, apart altogether from the School Board district question. It seemed to him that there was only one course open to the friends of the Voluntary Schools in regard to that Resolution, and that was that if they could not have all that they had asked for together but were to get it in instalments they should leave nothing undone to secure the first instalment at the earliest possible date. He was therefore anxious to give all his support to the Government in their efforts to secure additional grants to the Voluntary Schools. He believed the proposed five shillings grant, if not as much as they should like to see given would yet do something to shore up the Voluntary School system for some years, that it would improve education moral and mental in the Voluntary Schools, that it would relieve the managers of those Schools of much cause for anxiety, and he trusted the application of the money would be so earmarked in the Bill and that it would do something also to improve the position of the teaching staffs. No one could by any stretch of imagination write the word "final" across the Measure. It was but a temporary expedient dealing with a pressing difficulty. He believed the Bill would help the Voluntary Schools until some Statesman was prepared to grapple with the whole problem of elementary education, and when public opinion on the subject was sufficiently ripe to propose in the House of Commons that the State should take over the whole cost of the elementary education of the country. When that time arrived the words "Board" and "Voluntary" would become memories of the past; and the question of education would be for ever disassociated from sectarian hate and political partisanship. There were one or two questions he should like to ask before he sat down. He wished to know whether it was proposed to make the grants on the basis of the average attendance of the children or on the basis of the whole number of children on the register of the school. As there was a difference of half a million between the children on average attendance and the children on the rolls there would, of course, be a material difference in the amount of money available if the grants were made on the basis of the number of children on the register. No doubt it was intended by the Government that the grant should be made in respect of average attendance. He would abstain from criticism of the Bill until its provisions were in print; but there was one statement of the First Lord of the Treasury to which he desired briefly to draw attention, that associations containing a large number of town schools would be given grants at a greater rate than associations containing a preponderance of rural schools. The fact that the right hon. Gentleman after making that statement was interrupted and had to make further explanations, showed the incredulity with which the announcement was received by both sides of the House. He thought it showed a little ignorance as to the cost of school management on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. The cost per head of maintaining thirty scholars in a school in the rural parts of England and Wales might be much larger than the cost per head of maintaining a thousand scholars in a school in any of the towns. In the rural districts the greatest difficulty had been experienced by the children in getting efficient education in those schools, and in getting education under sanitary and comfortable conditions. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not an unknown thing for rural schools not to be provided with an adequate supply of drinking water for the children during their meal time. The expenditure for this would involve a cost on the managers of the schools, which they were unable to meet under the present grant. He urged the Government to remodel the proposal to offer a greater proportion of the grant to urban schools by turning it round and giving the greater proportion to the rural schools. This was a subject which ought not, he thought, to pass unnoticed when the terms of the Bill were before them. Perhaps he might apologise to the Minister in charge for having intervened at all in the discussion. It was to him a matter of very material importance, not only for the fact that he had been connected with this work for many years, but from the fact that his constituents were deeply interested in the question of grants to the poorer School Board districts. There was no borough, county, or district throughout the country where the pinch of the School Board rate had been more keenly felt than in the Borough of West Ham, and he sincerely hoped that a pledge would be given on the subject by one of the Members of the Government of an explicit character.

*Mr. D. F. GODDARD (Ipswich) said his first objection to these Resolutions was on the broad ground of religious equality. These Resolutions were conceived for the purpose of endowing the so-called Voluntary Schools to the exclusion of other elementary schools. The hollowness of the term "Voluntary" in this connection was plainly shown by the fact that in 1895 the Church of England schools had an income of £3,629,967, of which only £640,406 came from Voluntary subscriptions; an amount which really represented something like 2d. out of every 1s. of money used. He thought the time had come when the fiction of Voluntary Schools should be swept away, what was really meant was sectarian schools. What was really being done was to build up the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church by special grants of public money. The anxiety of these schools and Churches had never been for educational efficiency—[*Cries* of "Oh!"]—it had been to make their schools the nurseries of their ecclesiastical system. As a firm adherent to the principles of religious equality, he thought it was only right to protest against any such grant as this, and he believed the great mass of the people in the country would also object to it. They were going to tax the Roman Catholics for the benefit of the Established Church, and to tax the Nonconformists in order that in certain schools such catechisms as that of Mr. Gace, which consigned Nonconformists to the nethermost hell, should be taught. It must be clear to everybody that in supporting the Board Schools through the rates they were not supporting any distinctive doctrinal teaching, and at all events all classes of the community had the opportunity if they chose to avail themselves of it of being represented on the management, whereas there was no suggestion of control in these schools. His second objection was that this scheme would involve a great waste of the nation's money. He did not object to the expenditure of the nation's money for purposes of education, but he could see no guarantee that this money would be spent on better education. As in the case of the Agricultural Rating Bill of last year, the help would go to those who needed it least. It could scarcely be contended that all these schools really needed anything like an extra grant of 5s. when they remembered that in 1893 there were over 1,000 schools which were maintained without any subscriptions at all, and that there were something like 670 or 674 schools which were maintained with subscriptions of less than 1s. per child. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Associations which he referred to would increase the grant in some cases and reduce it in others. He thought this would prove to be an apple of discord amongst these Associations, as every one of those schools which had a chance of securing a 5s. grant would not make a claim for less. He did not notice any guarantee as to increased efficiency in the teaching in these schools. Again, no attempt was made to give the people whose money was to be used any more control over the schools than they had at the present time. He knew it would be said control would be vested in the Education Department. That was not the control the people asked for; they wanted a more definite local control. They demanded it, and that was what they would have. It was said by the Leader of the House that the accounts of the schools were to be properly audited. That was a distinctly good move, but it was not all that was wanted. It was necessary that the accounts should be published in the locality of a school, and so brought within reach of everyone interested. In conclusion, he desired to refer to the very serious remarks the First Lord of the Treasury addressed to those who were in favour of the present School Board system. The right hon. Gentleman told them they would only be rushing to the destruction of that system if they did anything to hasten the decay of the Voluntary system. Upon that point the Committee would, perhaps, allow him to quote some words of the Lord President of the Council. The noble Duke once said in the House of Commons:—

> "There are many of us, and I do not scruple to say I am one of them, who believe that the principle of School Boards is the right and true principle in this matter. We believe that being the right and true principle, it will in the end prevail. We believe when once the time has arrived that Parliament has declared the education of the country to be the business of the State, it becomes inevitable that sooner or later the State education must be in the hands not of individuals, but of the representatives of the people."

*SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford), who was received with cheers, said the Debate had shown to him more distinctly than ever how delicate was the compromise at which Parliament arrived in 1870, and how delicate and fine was the machinery of that compromise. He had always felt, and he felt it most acutely during the six years he was at the Education Office, that if in the slightest degree that machinery was disturbed great friction might immediately result, leading possibly to the utter disorganisation of the whole educational system. To-day they were in the midst of one of those educational controversies which afforded deep anxiety to all those who had Party instincts and deep consternation to those who had good education uppermost in their minds; the discussion also afforded great joy to the Opposition of the day. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not complain of the attitude of Her Majesty's Opposition in regard to this proposal. It was, indeed, a scanty bill of fare that had been prepared for them during this Session, and if they chose the only dainty dish set before them and dressed and redressed it for the benefit of the constituencies the Government and their supporters must not be too hard upon them. Besides and beyond the difficulties which must always attend any fresh effort respecting elementary education in this country the Government were confronted to-day with an opposition which had been made keener by the events of last year. He had no wish to condemn the Government for the failure of last year, but hon. Members must, in dealing with opposition like the present, look at the case as a whole. No doubt the Debates of last Session created a bitterness which made it much more difficult to deal with the subject now in a calm and sober mood. Somehow or other the fear had been spread among the ranks opposite that the Government intended some day or other, by one fell swoop, to destroy the School Board system. Personally he had always recognised the School Board as a great part of our educational system, and however eager he might be, for obvious reasons, to support the Voluntary Schools of the country, he had never failed to acknowledge the great educational effect of the Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] He assured his hon. Friends that they would never forward the cause they had at heart by attempting to disparage the work done by School Boards. [*Opposition cheers.*] It might be that in their efforts School Boards had caused grievous financial difficulties to the Voluntary Schools, but that was an incident of the situation, and he said advisedly that the best thing he and his hon. Friends could do, if they wished to come to a good decision, was to recognise the fact that the School Board system must obtain in this country, as part of our great educational system, a recognition which was perfectly compatible with their support of the Voluntary system. ["Hear, hear!"] There was one other very important matter in which grievous harm had been done with regard to the settlement of this question. He had a strong belief that they could only solve this question, not by annihilating the central department, which must always exist as a security to the taxpayers, but by appointing some great educational authority in each county in England and Wales—["hear, hear!"]—and in the metropolis, which would be not only representative in its character, but beyond the possibility of reproach in respect to its dealings as between Board and Voluntary Schools. The Debates of last year had a most unfortunate result on the County Councils. During the first few weeks after the introduction of last year's Bill the County Councils, with one solitary exception, expressed a readiness to undertake the duties sought to be imposed upon them, but when it became known to the County Councils that in Parliament Members were flying at each other's throats, and that besides the administrative efforts they would have to make they would have to deal with such a vexed and difficult question as that raging in the House of Commons between Board and Voluntary Schools, they very naturally, as businesslike and practical bodies, expressed a wish to have nothing to do with the matter. Hon. Members found themselves hampered by what happened last year, but they also found themselves face to face with a proposal which, after all, had the merit of being an honest endeavour to carry out the pledge which had been again and again given, not only in the country, but in the House. ["Hear, hear!"] For many weeks past he had noticed it foreshadowed in the Opposition Press that the Government intended some *coup* or some trap, and his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury had been pictured as engaged in bird-catching and other interesting rural amusements and sports. [*Laughter.*] So far from the Government having designed a trap for the Opposition, they had been led by force of circumstances to prepare a trap for themselves. [*Opposition cheers.*] They had been obliged to place this Resolution before the House, which gave hon. Members, whether supporters, or so-called supporters, of the Government—[*a laugh*)—or Members of the Opposition, free scope for their ingenuity, and allowed them to indulge not in Second Reading but Committee speeches. ["Hear!"] If there was any trap set for any particular bird in this case it had been the one set by the Government themselves. [*Opposition laughter.*] It was obvious that the Opposition were going to fight out this matter to the bitter end. [*Opposition cheers.*] They were difficult to deal with. [*Opposition cries of* "Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] If this Bill had referred only to necessitous Board Schools they would have heard throughout the length and breadth of the land denunciations of the Government for having only partially dealt with this great question. [*Opposition cheers.*] As far as his experience went, he was certain that it was utterly impossible for the Government to refuse to deal with necessitous Board Schools at an early date, and not only hon. Members of the Opposition, but those on the Ministerial benches had a fair claim to demand from the Government a very clear statement as to the time at which the House might look forward to for the introduction of such a Measure. ["Hear, hear!"] He had heard many speeches on the question; perhaps not so many in support of the Government Measure as he could have wished. [*Laughter.*] Though some hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House seemed to have been puzzled as to what the Bill would or would not do, he confessed that he had never been so much puzzled as he was by the course of the Debate last night. He had always supposed that at the last General Election a large number of his hon. Friends, and some Members of the Government, gave very distinct pledges that the monetary inequality between Voluntary and Board Schools should once for all be done away with. He did not himself give pledges of that nature, but had always understood that they were given broadcast. [*Opposition cheers.*] He further understood that an effort was made during the last Session by the Government to redeem that pledge, but by a Measure so large and ambitious that it had to be withdrawn. One of the chief reasons of the failure of this

Measure was the somewhat wholesale condemnation that it received from his hon. Friends below the Gangway on the ground that it did not go far enough—that it did not meet the requirements of the case. Now, the Government brought in a far less ambitious and far less comprehensive scheme which, to a great extent, met the demands of his hon. Friends with regard to the necessitous Voluntary Schools, and he never was more astounded than he was by the Debate that followed its introduction last night. He sat there hour by hour among supporters, not of Voluntary Schools but of Board Schools. [*Opposition laughter.*] Instead of hearing his hon. Friends thanking the Government for what they were proposing, he heard nothing of the kind. There was not even a murmur of thanks from them. [*Opposition laughter.*] Hon. Member after hon. Member rose around him until he was almost terrified out of his Parliamentary senses—[*laughter*]—not to commend the proposals of the Government under whose auspices they won their seats—[*ironical Opposition cheers*]—but to condemn them because, forsooth, they did not assist the Board Schools. He hoped he might be forgiven if he sat somewhat alarmed when he saw such strange phenomena going on around him. [*Laughter.*] Of course, it was to be understood that the action of the Government did not stop at the point of the present proposals touching the Voluntary Schools. He understood that a pledge, and a perfectly distinct pledge, would be given by the Government, in the course of the Debate, that a similar Measure would be applied to the necessitous Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] But, after all, the kernel of this question was the distribution of the money, and its importance led him to bitterly regret that they were unhappily prevented from setting up such an authority as he had intimated. There must be somebody responsible for the distribution of the fund, and the Government had fallen back on the Education Department, which was a good authority for the purpose as far as one point went. It had been hinted once or twice that the Education Department was not the proper authority for the purpose, and that there would be jealousies as between school and school and district and district. He believed there would be nothing of the kind. ["Hear, hear!"] If the Department were to be set up for the first time as a central authority in London to carry out the object, it would be a very bad and vicious principle, but this authority had always been engaged in giving grants to schools and carrying out this work under the Act of 1870, and so far as it would be responsible for the distribution of the funds he thought there would be no chance of bitterness or friction. Then as to the local authority. It was not the best that could have been obtained last year, but it was the next best at this date that could be devised to find out what really were the local needs and necessities of the schools. That was what was wanted. They did not want to see the money squandered on schools that did not require assistance. The proposal for an equal grant all round was, he believed, a foolish device for squandering the taxpayers' money. ["Hear, hear!"] Let them look at the question as they might, it was a matter of great importance to the taxpayers of the country as a whole, for the extinction of the Voluntary system would involve a large increase of national expenditure of many millions for elementary education. ["Hear, hear!"] The next point to consider was the new system of the association of schools. How was it going to work? He presumed that the associations would cover a very large area indeed; otherwise the system would be absurd. The more associations they had, the more intricate would be the work both locally and for the Department. Their primary duty would be to give the best information they could to the Department concerning every school in their area, and further to frame a scheme for the assistance of those schools. He believed that if they made association compulsory it would fail, but that it would work on a permissive basis. The schools that did not enter into the association would not be left out in the cold, but would be dealt with by the Department, which would be able to get information with regard to them from its own inspectors. The Department, as he understood the scheme, would not be tied by any local authority, but would be the supreme authority in regard to these transactions. It was very obvious that under such a scheme as this the Department would be able to deal, especially in rural districts, with many of the inequalities which occurred. It might be urged that this was new work for these associations. He did not think it would be so considered either by the Church of England, the Wesleyans, or the Roman Catholics. He would remind hon. Members that in every diocese the Church of England had her diocesan boards, which had not only to deal with large administrative work as regarded schools, but also and especially with this very work of aiding, through subscriptions, necessitous schools in their districts. Therefore, as regarded the Department, they had every information for the purpose of carrying out the new duties imposed upon them, and as regarded the local authorities, most of them would be dealing with work which, in many cases, they had been performing for years. Then there was the question of the allotment of this money to various localities or various areas. The First Lord of the Treasury had stated that a larger sum would be allotted to the urban or town districts than would be allotted to the country districts. That was, no doubt, an unpleasant statement for those who represented rural constituencies, but he thought some misapprehension existed on the point. In many districts, no doubt, such as Manchester and the larger Lancashire towns, where there were poor districts with large schools and a larger number of pupils in them—in the very poorest districts, such as he had referred to, and such as they had in the East End of London, it must be necessary to allot a much larger sum than would be allotted to the country. But he would ask the Committee to consider—and this was the test of the thing—whether it would be possible under this scheme for any rural school in any county in England which was in difficulties to continue to suffer and yet not get a grant from the Education Department, if it was to be supreme in these matters. As he understood, the proposals of the Government would be wide enough in their scope to deal with any necessitous school, whether in town or in country. ["Hear, hear!"] If they were satisfied on that point, it mattered little to those who represented rural districts, whether the gross sum allotted in each case was larger or smaller. All they required to be satisfied upon was that before the Bill passed through Committee it should be provided that in no case should a rural school which really wanted aid have withheld from it a grant to the proper amount. ["Hear, hear!"] He could not but allude to the question of subscription to Voluntary Schools. It was perfectly obvious that they must now allow this Measure to go forward as a relief to subscribers to Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] He thought it absolutely necessary that in this new Act there should be a direction to the Education Department that, in all cases in which help was given to Voluntary Schools, due consideration should be given to the subscriptions paid to the schools. He thought it should be a *sine quâ non* in all cases in which assistance was to be given to the locality that there should be some guarantee, on the part of the locality, that the subsisting subscriptions would be maintained. [*Opposition cheers.*] It would be urged that the more they gave to Voluntary Schools the more the subscriptions would drop away. [*Opposition cheers.*] He would like to tell the House what happened in the case of the Free Education Act, against which a similar objection was urged. In 1890, before that Act came into operation, the rate subscribed per head per child in Voluntary Schools was 6s. 7½d. In 1895—five years after the Act came into force—the rate was 6s. 9d. [*Cheers.*] That was, in his opinion, a conclusive answer to the objection that the first result of this grant would be to produce a diminution of subscriptions. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government had been rather roughly handled on the question of passing this scheme through before the 31st of March. He owned that he for one considered it was absolutely necessary that they should meet early this Session so as to be able to carry a Measure through for the appropriation of a certain sum in the Treasury, and that it should be handed over at once to the assistance of Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] It seemed that they were doomed to disappointment on that point, but he thought he had, at all events, shown two things—in the first place, that the grant of to-day was different from the grant proposed yesterday—[*cheers*]—and, in the second place, that the application

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of the grant was also totally different, that these proposals were by no means on all fours with the late proposals of the Government, and that it would be absolutely impossible to allocate what remained of this sum so as to fit it with the existing proposals of the Government. He had spoken at length, because he had felt that the occasion not only required but demanded it. [*Opposition cheers.*] It might be true that in this case, as in that of many of his hon. Friends, there were some things in this Measure of which he might not altogether approve. He should have liked a better and a more comprehensive scheme and to have had allied with this scheme something that would have given a clear definition of what elementary education really meant compared with what it meant when Mr. Forster gave them that famous guarantee with regard to expenditure upon their elementary education. Like many others on that side of the House he might be disappointed in one or two points, but he should support this proposal with his vote to the very end—[*Opposition ironical cheers*]—because he honestly believed that in the difficult, the almost impossible, circumstances of the case it was the very best proposal the Government could have produced. ["Hear, hear!"] He could not understand for what earthly reason hon. Members should be picking holes in this Resolution because it did not happen to suit the position of some obscure school in their constituencies. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] After spending 30 years in the support of a Party was he to throw Party loyalty to the winds because of some trifling matter such as this, and forget those huge interests—Imperial, national, and colonial—committed to the charge of his right. hon Friends below him? He almost shuddered to think of the hilarity with which hon. Members greeted the spectacle of hon. Friends near him attacking this proposal and who were delighted with their performance and yet were always so frightened when the time for voting came. [*Cheers and laughter.*] In all good humour and with the best of temper he would remind hon. Gentlemen that big majorities did not last for ever. [*Opposition cheers and laughter.*] He was old enough to give them the advantage of his experience, and he reminded them of what took place in the years 1868 to 1874. He was Whip to the Party in those years, and well remembered Mr. Gladstone's majority in 1868 of over 100, and how the Opposition cheered when the majority on a division was not more than 70 or 80. What killed that majority in 1874? He had his hand on the tiller throughout the whole of the election, and knew what upset that majority. [*Cheers and laughter.*] It was a clause in the Education Act of 1870; it was the disgust of Nonconformists with Mr. Forster and others leaders of their Party that upset the Government at that time. He could assure his hon. Friends that they were playing with edged tools in their criticisms of this Measure. [*Opposition laughter.*] If they wanted to understand the effect of their conduct let them look at the delight of hon. Members opposite. [*Renewed laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite had been bubbling over with laughter and cheers ever since last night. [*Loud laughter.*] Of this he was quite certain, that whatever criticisms of this Measure might come from the other side of the House, Her Majesty's Government had only to go forward with determination and they would secure an adequate result for their labours and real and lasting assistance to Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.), who was received with cheers, said: It is not unnatural that an old and distinguished Whip like my right hon. Friend should have been disturbed by the strange phenomena by which he found himself surrounded last night, and I am not surprised that he should have delivered a rather severe lecture to Members on his own side who do not take quite the same view of their election pledges as he takes. I am under the impression that a great many Members opposite who unquestionably did pledge themselves in the strongest manner to support a Measure for giving additional relief to Voluntary Schools did in towns accompany the pledge with a declaration that they would do nothing to injure Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] I think they are—it is perhaps impertinent for me to interfere—I think they are fulfilling pledges given when they take exception to the manner in which the Bill proposes to deal with the interests of Board Schools. ["Hear,

hear!"] I am rather surprised that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Hart Dyke) should administer to us with his usual good humour and candour a lecture about making Second Reading speeches. I think my right hon. Friend has gone into the details of the Bill in a manner which suggests that he has had some better means of information as to the meaning of the Bill than we poor ignorant mortals could derive from the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury. I am not going to make a Second Reading speech, and I am not going into the details of the Measure on the present occasion. I feel the difficulty of discussing the details of any measure before the Bill in its entirety is before the House, and I confess I did not understand last night—I have not the acuteness of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin—the scheme of the association of schools. I do not complain of that, for I can quite understand the scheme is complicated and does require to be seen in print before we can form a complete idea of it. But this stage of the Bill it not what the First Lord of the Treasury has described as a purely formal one. If this were a purely formal vote on which an ordinary Ways and Means Bill should be founded, then there would be great force in the statement the right hon. Gentleman made as to the non-necessity of protracted discussion, and there would have been a fair appeal to precedent that whereas the forms of the House require the introduction of a resolution in Committee, yet nevertheless the introduction should be regarded as a First Reading and Debate and should not be continued in a manner unusual to that stage of a Bill. But the Government have adopted a policy on this occasion which compels discussion now—["hear, hear!"]—and at this stage, on what we think the most vital parts of the Bill. [*Cheers.*] The Government have no right to complain of that discussion—they have no right to attempt to abbreviate it. [*Cheers.*] They have themselves selected this mode of procedure.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: We had no alternative.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I quite understand that is the right hon. Gentleman's view, and I am going to deal with it. He said the other night there was no alternative, but there we join issue. There is no alternative, according to the Standing Orders of the House, when a Government proposes a Bill the main object of which is to grant public money, no alternative to the adoption of the course of introducing the Bill in pursuance of a resolution in Committee. That I concede to the right hon. Gentleman, but, while the orders of the House require that a Bill dealing with the granting of public money should be introduced in Committee of the whole House, the Standing Orders do not require that the resolution should be so limited as to preclude discussion on one of the vital principles of the proposal. [*Cheers.*] Let me put this fairly before the House. The Government might have proposed, but they have not, to give additional aid to denominational schools on the ground of grave necessity existing in certain schools or in certain districts. In that case it ought to be open to the Opposition to say, and we should have said, "Such aid should be granted to Board Schools where equal necessity prevails." ["Hear, hear!"] That is what the Government might do, but what have the Government done? They have proposed that such additional aid shall be granted to all denominational schools equally. ["Hear, hear!"] If that be so, then we have the right to say that all Board Schools should share in this grant, that they should be treated alike. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not dealing with the question whether that is a right contention or not; I am dealing simply with the procedure which the Government have adopted, and to which the right hon. Gentleman said there was no alternative. The Government have adopted a procedure which prevents any Member or any section of the House joining issue on this contention; they have precluded us alike from discussion and division what we consider the main objection to this Bill. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: What other form could we adopt?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: What is the ground on which the restriction is made? The right hon. Gentleman says what form could he have adopted. It is not the invariable form to limit a resolution. A resolution is made wide, and then the

Bill following upon that resolution limits its operation. ["Hear, hear!"] Now what is the justification, or what was it until 4 o'clock yesterday? It was this—the saving of time. This is the justification Members have put forward—that it was necessary to pass any measure dealing with Voluntary Schools before March 31, and that any additional matter introduced into that Bill to make the Bill provocative of discussion and contentious in character would prejudice the passage of the Bill before March 31. That was what the country understood; that was what an overwhelming number of Members of the House understood. ["Hear, hear!"] Let us see whether there is any substance in that contention. Assume that it be the case; assume that the Government had not departed from their position, that they still say, "We will fulfill the pledges we gave last year; you shall have the money for Voluntary Schools before March 31"; assume that to be the case. Then I say the argument that the inclusion of grants to Board Schools would protract procedure is an unsound one. The inclusion of Board Schools would save time. ["Hear, hear!"] Measures of equal justice pass far more rapidly in this House than measures of discriminating injustice. [*Cheers.*] There would have been less discussion on the chief and main contention—there are many others—that whatever you do all schools should be treated alike. That would have been taken out of discussion altogether. The Government would have had the support of all denominationalists, of all Members who have pledged themselves to equal treatment between different classes of schools; they would have had the support of the School Boards and of the ratepayers, and that is not a support to be despised by any Government under any circumstances. [*Cheers.*] But now we are told it is not the intention of the Government to pass this Measure before March 31.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: We hope to do so.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Well, of course, all Governments hope to do so. That is their desire.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Hear, hear.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: That is their desire, their hope, and that is generally their illusion. We endeavoured to pass some Bills in our time, and we were satirised by no one more severely than the right hon. Gentleman himself as to the folly of the hopes we indulged in. The right hon. Gentleman does not imitate that folly. He says at once,

> "I cannot pass this Measure by March 31. I hope to do it, I wish to do it, and if the House would quietly vote upon it without discussion it can be done."

He knows as well as we do it is impossible that a Bill of this kind could pass into law before March 31. [*Cheers.*] Well, then, we have got the whole Session before us. The time limit is gone. [*Cheers.*] There can be no argument in saying there shall be this roundabout process of two Bills when the whole thing can be done in one. [*Cheers.*] I venture to assert that if this Bill dealt out equal justice to the Board Schools as compared with the Voluntary Schools it would not require but one additional clause in it to cover all those who desire equality. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman who last spoke reminded us of the history of last year. Yes, it was on March 31 of last year that the Government, with the Session then all before them, and with other important Measures also mentioned in the Queen's Speech, introduced their gigantic scheme which was to overturn the whole settlement of 1870, and which was to revolutionise, either for evil or good, the whole system of national education in this country. [*Cheers.*] They were not then deterred by the time limit. [*Renewed cheers.*] If I remember aright, the right hon. Gentleman assured us at a much later period of the Session that it was the full intention of the Government that the Bill should be passed during that Session. If the Government intend to include Board Schools and to give them any relief whatever, there is no necessity why a Bill introduced on February 1, and when, therefore, there can be no pressure of time, should not include all the Government proposals. [*Cheers.*] We have a sort of pledge or promise. It has not been given yet but it is going to be given. The hon. Member for West Ham said he assumed a pledge would be given, and my right hon. Friend who has just sat down spoke, in a style with which a good many of us are familiar, as to his reliance on the promise not yet before the House, but which he said he believed would be before the House, with reference to the introduction of another Bill. If that be the intention of the Government, if that is to be the pledge of the Government, if they think it necessary to have another Resolution, another First and Second Reading, another Committee stage, and another Third Reading—all to save time—[*cheers and laughter*]—all to promote the rapid progress of this Measure through the House—[*laughter*]—then all I can say is let them ask men who have been in this House five years—I will not take a longer period—whether they will be deluded by such a transparent fallacy. [*Cheers.*] There is but one mode and one way in which the Government can make this pledge effective. It is this, and we shall hold them to it. If they are in earnest on this question will they pledge themselves to the House, as we pledged ourselves to the House in 1893, that they will not advise Her Majesty to prorogue Parliament until the Bill dealing with Board Schools has passed into law. [*Cheers.*] If they do not give that pledge, I think their pledge is absolutely worthless. [*Cheers.*] But there is one advantage in two Bills. I do not know whether it has occurred to the right hon. Gentleman—I do not impute to him that such a possibility has crossed his mind, but there is one advantage. He relies strongly upon the Standing Orders of this House, which require that Money Bills should be introduced in Committee. But there are some other Standing Orders of this House, and something more important than even Standing Orders—the Constitution—which does not allow a Money Bill to be altered, or amended, or dealt with in another place. They can reject it, they cannot alter it. If you have one Bill dealing both with Voluntary Schools and with Board Schools and that Bill goes to another place, it will either have to be passed or rejected as a whole. [*Cheers.*] I do not think even the Bishop of Chester would take upon himself the responsibility of rejecting a Government Bill under those circumstances. [*Laughter and cheers.*] But if two Bills go to the other House, one dealing only with Voluntary Schools, and the other dealing only with Board Schools, I should not like to prophesy what would be the fate of the second Bill. [*Cheers.*] But let us assume that the Government are of opinion that this grant ought not to be made to the Board Schools, why should they prevent Debate in this House? Why should they prevent the House expressing an opinion on that question? Why not let the arguments be heard, meeting those arguments with counter-arguments and not with the gag? [*Cheers.*] Why not meet them as every other question in this House is met—by fair discussion and full Debate? [*Cheers.*] Every Member of the House has a right to vote upon the question, and what the Government are preventing is the House voting on this simple issue whether Board Schools should be treated equally with Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] Of course, hon. Members who feel strongly in favour of this additional grant to Voluntary Schools cannot, and will not, vote for the rejection of this Resolution. That is really the trap in which we are put. We cannot vote upon the question, Is it right or is it wrong to treat Board Schools the same as Voluntary Schools? We have but one division here, and that division is whether this Resolution should be rejected or accepted. We cannot expand it or put anything into it which would add to the expenditure by one shilling. When we arrive at the Committee stage any Member who moved an Amendment to include Board Schools would be met by the Chairman saying it was out of order. I say not only has this House the right to discuss, debate, and divide on this question, but our constituents have a right to know how we vote upon it. [*Cheers.*] There are some few hon. Members who can speak with authority on this question. There is my hon. Friend, the Member for Edgbaston, who has perhaps, done more for education in Birmingham than any man living. He has told us frankly what is the fatal blot in this scheme—it is the non-extension of the Bill to the Board Schools. But he cannot vote in this House upon it. If the right hon. Gentleman would simply strike out the word "voluntary" from his Resolution, and put in "elementary," he can restrict his own Bill as much as he likes, and with his big majority—now, I should think, after the crack of this afternoon's whip, reduced to perfect and unquestioning obedience —I have no doubt he can carry any Bill he likes. We do not expect to defeat it. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] I thank hon. Members for that cheer, which is a frank expression that they do not like to talk about the Measure, and that they have an objection to argument. But you may depend upon it you will never shut the mouths of Members of this House or of people in this country who are strong advocates of doing justice to Board Schools by any such procedure as this you have adopted. The House of Commons is proud of its great traditions of fair play and free discussion, and I think that these traditions should be rigidly maintained whenever we are dealing with the appropriation of public money. [*Cheers.*] I have always regarded the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury as a consummate debater and a peculiarly fair opponent, and it would have been the very last criticism I should have passed on him that I thought him capable of endeavouring to pass legislation without giving the House the fullest opportunity of stating objections to the legislation which he himself believed to be good, but which others thought to be injurious. If the right hon. Gentleman will agree to change the word "voluntary" and introduce "elementary" it does not pledge him to alter his Bill or to extend its scope. But it would give us an opportunity of saying that these Board Schools and denominational schools should be put on an equal footing. If he will not do that he has no right to complain of our discussing the subject on this Resolution. It is not a question of one, two, three, or four nights which we ought to have for discussion. [*Ministerial laughter.*] Many of those hon. Gentlemen who are now laughing were not in the House at the time, but I can remember how, in the last Parliament, hon. Members opposite claimed to be entitled to a much longer time for the discussion of isolated clauses and phrases in a Bill to which they objected. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman complained the other night that my right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham had introduced words which represented something that did not exist. My right hon. Friend alluded to the words "statutory equality." Those words are the Duke of Devonshire's. [*Cheers.*] That is an apt and accurate phrase. There is statutory equality at this moment, and if this Resolution were passed it would authorise the House to repeal that statutory equality. The right hon. Gentleman criticised my right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham for not having read Section 97 of the Education Act. I am not fond of *tu quoques*, but I do not think the right hon. Gentleman himself could have read that section. It distinctly enacts that the conditions of the annual Parliamentary grant—and this is going to be an annual Parliamentary grant—"shall not give any preference or advantage to any school on the ground that it is, or it is not, provided by the School Board." [*Opposition cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, but the section goes on to give a privilege to poor Board Schools which is not given to Voluntary Schools, whether poor or rich. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: What the section does is this. It provides that where the 3d. rate will not produce 7s. 6d. per head of the children at school, there shall be a small additional grant made to that school. [*Ministerial cheers.*] It enacts that the Parliamentary grant shall not be subject to any conditions restricting its application to Voluntary Schools or Board Schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: That is restricting.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Do hon. Members think that the few thousand pounds which have been given under that Act were any advantage to Board Schools over Voluntary Schools? [AN HON. MEMBER: "Certainly."] All I can say is that the hon. Member who says "certainly" cannot be very familiar with the circumstances of School Boards. [*Cheers.*] [AN HON. MEMBER: It gives £40,000.] At all events where is this statutory equality? Hon. Members do not mean to provide for Board Schools.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: In this Bill.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Why is the principle of statutory equality to be departed from? The right hon. Gentleman told us that the number of children in average attendance in the schools was 4,500,000. Of these

2,500,000 are in Voluntary Schools, and 2,000,000 in Board Schools. The ratepayers of this country pay £4,000,000 in rates for the education of these children. The average rate in England is 9d.; in London 10¼d., in boroughs 8¾d., and in parishes 8d. That is a very heavy rate, and when you come to analyse it and apply it to parishes and boroughs, you have this result—that there are 1,764 parishes and 138 boroughs where the rate is 3d. and above, and you have only 206 parishes and 21 boroughs where it is below. The hon. Member for West Ham spoke of the enormous rating of his constituency. I may say there are 297 rural parishes where the rate is upwards of 1s., and in 108 boroughs and 892 parishes the rate is between 6d. and 1s. The burden of these rates is very heavy in the large towns. The right hon. Gentleman said the other night that Gentlemen on this side of the House were not noted for their readiness to relieve the ratepayers, and he based that accusation on the fact that last Session we claimed that relief to ratepayers should not be confined to one class of ratepayers, but extended to all. There is no reason why the relief now proposed should not be equally extended. But the great point of complaint is that there is unfair and undue competition between the Board Schools and the Voluntary Schools, and that the Government are bound to bring forward this exclusive Measure to prevent the destruction of Voluntary Schools. It is absolutely one of those delusions for which there is not a shadow of foundation that the Voluntary School system is decaying and dying out. Let me give a few figures. In 1870 there were 1,150,000 children in Voluntary Schools, to-day there are 2,500,000. [*Ministerial cheers.*] All honour to Voluntary Schools. But you cannot have all the signs of robust health and, at the same time, be dying of mortal disease. [*Cheers and laughter.*] Then in 1870 there were 8,281 Voluntary Schools. Since 1870 1,323 have been transferred to Board Schools. So, if matters remained as they were, there would be 7,000 Voluntary Schools, but now there are 14,479. Of the 1,323 which have been transferred to School Boards, 260 were British, or undenominational Schools. The transfer of the Church of England Schools is an unappreciable figure. There were only 19 transferred last year. Does that justify you in coming to the House and saying, "We claim public money because we are expiring?" [*Cheers.*] Put your claim on its true and proper ground, and the House of Commons will listen to it. The difficulty is not the extinction of Voluntary Schools, not that the scholars are decreasing, the buildings decaying, and their hold on the popular mind weakening, but this. The Education Department, wisely and righteously, as I think, have elevated the standard of popular education and have made demands on Voluntary Schools and upon Board Schools which have necessitated a large increase of expenditure. That is the true state of the case —not that there is any hostility and—most absurd of all statements—that there is competition. The chairman of the Birmingham School Board and my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham have disposed of that from the School Board and teachers' point of view; and the hon. Member for Monmouthshire as far as his experience went. [*Ministerial laughter.*] His experience is great. He has been for 15 years the respected chairman of a large and successful School Board, where he told us there was perfect amity of feeling between both sides on this question. I do not believe there is any attempt, on the one side, to destroy School Boards, or, on the other, to destroy Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Member for London University complained of the hardship upon subscribers to Voluntary Schools who had to pay the School Board rate. Subscribers to Voluntary Schools pay their subscriptions towards what is to them a noble object. But paying rates is not, as some people think, a contribution to a private adventure school set up by a private body in competition with existing schools. It is an obligation imposed by the Legislature on the community that where there is not a proper number of schools they shall provide them; and the private subscriber has no more right to complain of paying his School Board rate and trying to set off one contribution against another than a charitable donor has to say he will set off his contributions to private charity against his poor rate.

[*Cheers.*] If Voluntary Schools complain justly—I find no fault with their complaint—of the heavy expenditure put on their shoulders, so do the ratepayers. Why should the ratepayers be left out in the cold? ["Hear, hear!"] Why is the sympathy which the right hon. Gentleman claims a monopoly of for ratepayers not to be extended to those who live in large towns? Hon. Members have spoken very properly of their own experience in their own locality. I represent a town where Board and Voluntary Schools are in full working order, where they are both of high character, and there is no competition. I can assure hon. Gentlemen opposite whose experience is confined to rural districts that it is not the desire of the ratepayers in large towns to extinguish Voluntary Schools. In Wolverhampton we have upwards of 5,000 children in the Board Schools and upwards of 8,000 in the Voluntary Schools, and admirable Voluntary Schools they are. The grant earned is approximately much the same in both kinds of schools. We have schools belonging to the Church of England, the Church of Rome, and also to the Wesleyan body. Under this Bill the ratepayers of Wolverhampton, who are now—I think I am speaking correctly—paying a school rate of about 8d. in the pound, in a town where the rates are 7s. 3d. in the pound, where they feel the pressure of school rates quite as acutely as the supporters of Voluntary Schools feel the pressure of their subscriptions—if this Bill becomes law the ratepayers will see subscribers to Voluntary Schools in Wolverhampton receiving upwards of £2,150, while they will not receive a penny. Where is the justice of that? [*Cheers.*] What crime have School Boards committed that they are to be treated in this manner? One or two hon. Members, notably the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last, have censured seriously the constant attempt to denounce Board Schools and describe them as if they were national evils, a sort of insanitary dwellings which ought to be treated as if propagating a plague. All that hon. Members can say against Board Schools was that in certain cases they had been extravagant. What public body has not been extravagant in its time? [*Cheers.*] Have town councils never been extravagant? Have vestries never been extravagant? Have County Councils never been extravagant? Has the House of Commons never been extravagant? [*Cheers.*] There has been waste of public money everywhere, and I venture to say there has been less extravagance in connection with the School Board system than in connection with almost any other body in this country. [*Cheers.*] An hon. Member talked about the "bottomless purse of the rates." Do hon. Members who represent large towns endorse that? [*Cheers.*] Do they not know that there is nothing more difficult than to get an additional rate in large towns? Do they not know that the rates are virtually settled by the ratepayers themselves, and that School Boards are changed every three years by popular election? If the ratepayers choose themselves to increase their rates no outsider has any right to complain. [*Cheers.*] For anyone professing to know anything about our local expenditure to say that it is easy to raise the rates is simply to proclaim his own total and absolute ignorance. [*Cheers.*] The School Boards, I admit, have raised education to a higher standard, and they have endeavoured to reach a lofty ideal, and the House and the country should be indebted to them for it. [*Cheers.*] There are hon. Members in this House who say, Whatever else you spend money upon you must maintain the defences of the country. You must make your Navy as complete, as strong, and as efficient as you can because the defence of the country is the first consideration. I agree with that, but I would point out that this country has other defences besides the Navy. The dangers of this country are ignorance, vice, and crime, and against these three deadly foes the elevation of our national system of education has been one of our strongest bulwarks. [*Cheers.*] We know, and the President of the Board of Trade knows, that however much we may be encouraged and comforted by the recent returns showing that there has been an exaggeration as to foreign competition, every man connected with trade knows that there is a reality in that danger, and that it is necessary that our working classes and artisans should be educated to a much higher point than they are educated today; and no money can be better or more wisely spent than on education. [*Cheers.*] We are a rich nation. The money is pouring in, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer knows, by hundreds of thousands—I might almost say by millions at the present moment—and there can be no more beneficial application of the national wealth than the application of it to the improvement of the education of the people. There is no necessity on pecuniary grounds for discriminating between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] There is no reason of time; there is no question of opportunity. Both sides of the House will support a Measure of justice and fairness. There is no question of financial resources. We complain that the First Lord of the Treasury shut us up to this inept, inconvenient, and unfortunate method of dealing with this question, and we ask him to remove that restriction and enable us wholly and fairly to Debate the question in the whole House when the Bill comes before the House. We think we are entitled to claim a distinct Debate and a distinct Division upon that question. [*Cheers.*] If he deprives us of that, he may win, as I have no doubt he will win, and secure by a large majority the passage of this Resolution, but he will stamp it with a stigma of injustice which the whole country will appreciate. [*Loud cheers.*]

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs), who was received with cheers, said he had listened with very great surprise to the observation of the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken with regard to the procedure the Government were taking in this case. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly entitled to his opinion that it would be better to deal with all schools in one Bill. The Government thought it would be better to deal with Voluntary Schools in one Bill and with such Board Schools as required special treatment in another Bill. [*Opposition laughter.*] That was a matter on which there might be a difference of opinion, but he did not think there could be any difference of opinion in the House as to one suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman suggested that the reason why the Government had taken this course was that if there were two Bills it would be possible that in another place the Bill dealing with Voluntary Schools might be passed and that dealing with Board Schools rejected. He ventured to think that a more unworthy suspicion had never been uttered. [*Cheers.*] He did not think it was worthy of the right hon. Gentleman who uttered it or of the right hon. Gentleman who cheered it. [*Cheers.*]

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It was done on the Paper Bill.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL said it was an idea that never occurred to Her Majesty's Government. It was an idea they repudiated with indignation, and he ventured to think that it was a suggestion which should not have been introduced into the Debate. [*Cheers.*] He had listened with almost equal surprise to the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the procedure adopted in putting this Resolution on the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "Why do you not make your resolution wide enough to include all schools, Board Schools as well as Voluntary Schools?"

It was perfectly true, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that they might have a wide resolution and yet limit it by the Bill. It was also perfectly true that it was the duty of those proposing a resolution of this kind to make it conform as nearly as might be to the Bill to be introduced. [*Cheers.*] It would be, he ventured to say, contrary to Parliamentary practice and the traditions of the House to cast the net wide in the way that the right hon. Gentleman suggested, to frame a wide resolution, apparently by way of catching support in all quarters, when it had been determined that the Bill was to be confined to a particular class of measure. [*Cheers.*] Such a practice would be unworthy of that House, and in taking the course the Government had taken they not only had not been guilty of any want of fair play whatever, but they had, as he ventured to submit to the better judgment of the Committee, taken the only course properly open to them. [*Cheers.*] What was the grievance of the right hon. Gentleman? Did it prevent discussion on the question that Board Schools should be included? The right hon. Gentleman's own speech was the best answer to that. Would it prevent the right hon. Gentleman from raising the point again on the Second Reading?

[*Opposition cries of* "Yes."] It would not. A declaratory Amendment might be put down and the rejection of the Bill might be moved on the ground that it did not extend to Board Schools. No idea could be more unfounded than that the Government supposed that the discussion of this question could be prevented by the form of the Resolution. ["Hear, hear!"] Another observation of the right hon. Gentleman was that this Bill was conceived in a spirit of hostility to Board Schools. There could be no greater mistake. The Government recognised the good work the Board Schools had done in secular education, and that in many cases they gave admirable religious education. But it was not a religious education which was satisfactory to the consciences of all parents. [*Cheers.*] It was said that this Bill was contrary to religious equality. He believed in religious equality, but it must be religious equality all round. [*Cheers.*] Was it religious equality that because the religious teaching in Board Schools was satisfactory to a number of parents, those parents who objected to such teaching as inadequate for their children should be rated for the support of the special religious teaching given in Board Schools and should be left to struggle with the difficulty of keeping up as best they could schools in which their children received the religious education they desired? It had been said how many things had been done in the name of liberty. Still stranger things were attempted to be done nowadays in the name of religious equality. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham said that this Bill did not carry out the principle laid down by the Prime Minister in 1895 when he said that the first point to be dealt with in reference to education was that in the conduct of the education of this country provision should be made by which the children might be taught the religious faith their parents desired them to be taught. The right hon. Gentleman said the Bill did not carry out that principle because there was no equivalent in it to Clause 27 of the Bill of last year providing for special religious teaching in schools at the request of a sufficient number of parents. Was that the only mode in which provision could be made for religious teaching? Surely by maintaining the efficiency of Voluntary Schools, which had been kept in existence at a vast sacrifice for that purpose, they were taking as effective a step as could be taken for carrying out the first purpose indicated by the Prime Minister. ["Hear, hear!"] The second purpose the Prime Minister mentioned was that some relief should be given to the ever-increasing burden of the Education Rate. The right hon. Gentleman said this Bill did not do that. But to what extent would the rate increase if Voluntary Schools died out? Surely the right hon. Gentleman must realise that, heavy as the rate might be in a place like Wolverhampton, it was nothing to what it would be if Voluntary Schools were suffered to be extinguished. A Bill which was intended to help Voluntary Schools to hold their own was not only in the true interest of religious equality, but was also in the interests of the ratepayer. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Member for Rotherham had quoted from the reply of the President of the Council to a deputation of Archbishops and Bishops. He thought that quotation gave a most inadequate idea of what the Duke of Devonshire said on that occasion. The Duke of Devonshire was then dealing with a proposal that the fixed grant should be increased, and he pointed out with unanswerable force that if they increased the fixed grant all round they would waste the money of the public, because they would give the grant to all schools alike, and while some schools would want nothing, to others an increase of 5s. would not be enough. That passage in the Duke of Devonshire's speech was much more germane to the Bill than the passage quoted by the right hon. Gentleman. He had been unable to find in *The Times* report of the remarks of the Duke of Devonshire on that occasion the expression "statutory equality." If this expression was used it was in reference only to the question of the fixed grant. Any one who said that statutory equality in any wider sense existed was utterly and absolutely mistaken. There was no statutory equality as between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools. In the first place, the Board Schools had at their back the rates; they could draw on the rates to any extent, and did draw upon them to a very large extent, as the ratepayers of the country very well knew. And with regard to the Parliamentary grant, Section 97 of the Act of 1870 contained a proviso which conferred on Board Schools in poor districts a privilege which was not conferred on Voluntary Schools at all. Thus, so far from there being any statutory equality, there was statutory inequality, and it was with the view of, to some degree, redressing that statutory inequality that this Bill was brought forward by the Government. [*Cheers.*] Voluntary Schools were an essential element in the settlement of the educational question which was arrived at in 1870. The religious feeling of a large number of parents must be met. Whatever the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton might say as to the increased attendance in Voluntary Schools, and whatever was the cause, he appealed to the Committee whether it was not a matter of common knowledge that the Voluntary Schools were in very many cases very hard put to it indeed. It was with difficulty that they kept their heads above water, and the object of the Bill was to help them to increase their efficiency and make them contribute even more worthily than at present to the completion of the educational machinery of the country. He did not attribute to the Board Schools or to those who managed them any unworthy motives of competition with Voluntary Schools. He did not believe such motives existed, or if they did exist at all it was only in the most exceptional and special cases. But Voluntary Schools were inevitably suffering owing to the fact that they were in competition with those who had behind them the bottomless purse of the ratepayers. They were hard squeezed, and in some cases were in danger of being squeezed out of existence. But then it was said there were also poor Board Schools, and that they ought also to be dealt with. He thought one lesson must have impressed itself on the mind of everyone who had followed Parliamentary procedure of late, and that was the wisdom of doing one thing at a time. [*Cheers.*] The Government did not fail to recognise the case for aid to the poor Board Schools. What the First Lord of the Treasury had said on that subject must not be minimised in the way that had been attempted by some speakers opposite. The Government had every intention of dealing with the question of poor Board Schools at as early a date as possible. The method of best carrying out that object had been for some time under the consideration of the Government, and they would be prepared to bring their proposals forward on the first suitable occasion. [*Cheers and Opposition laughter.*] There was one remark he would make. If the Bill now under consideration met with such detailed resistance and obstruction as had been threatened—[*cheers and cries of* "Oh!"]—the country would be able to realise—[*cheers and counter cheers and Opposition cries of* "Romford!"]—that that obstruction was directed, not only against the Bill now under consideration, but might also in its effects prejudice the Bill for the relief of poor Board Schools. [*Cheers and Opposition laughter.*] Surely if right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were in earnest in this matter; if what they desired was that the poor Board Schools should be aided, if what they were in search of was not a weapon to attack the present proposal of the Government, but if they were actuated by a genuine desire to help poor Board Schools—[*Opposition cries of* "All schools"]—they would with adequate discussion, but not more than adequate discussion, deal with the Bill now before the Committee. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Member for Bodmin referred to the Bill as savouring of injustice because it might help Voluntary Schools without helping poor Board Schools in the same neighbourhood, and which he said were equally deserving of help. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see the propriety of not quarrelling with a Measure of this kind merely on a question of procedure. The demands put forward by some Members of the Opposition went far beyond the question of aid to poor Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] They had been told that aid should be given to all schools alike, whether poor or rich, whether Board or Voluntary. That was a proposal not to improve educational machinery, but to relieve the rates. The hon. Member for the Edgbaston Division told them that any aid given to Board Schools in Birmingham would go to the relief of the ratepayer, and his speech was cheered by hon. Gentlemen opposite because they regarded it as hostile to the Measure now under consideration. He would like to know what reception hon. Gentlemen opposite would have given to a proposal made by the Government to apply the money of the taxpayer in relief of the ratepayers of Birmingham. [*Cheers.*] What a howl of derision would have been raised! They would have been met by all the arguments which were directed against another Measure with a similar object which was passed last year. [*Cheers.*] But such a proposal would not rest there. It would bring them to this —that the taxpayer should undertake the whole expense of the maintenance of education throughout the country to the relief of the subscribers and ratepayers alike. That might be a counsel of perfection; on its merits he expressed no opinion. But to call it a Measure which might be embodied in a simple little Bill was rather too strong. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not know what the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say to such a proposal. Was the country ripe for it? Was it not rather a waste of time, when the question before them was what could be done in a practical way to relieve schools that needed aid, to embark on the discussion of such an heroic remedy? The Measure under consideration was a modest and he hoped would be an effective Measure. It provided for a grant which in the aggregate was not to exceed 5s. for each child in all Voluntary Schools. That grant was not to be distributed to all alike. Some of the schools wanted nothing; some wanted a great deal more than 5s. per child. They must discriminate. At present there was no machinery available for discrimination, and they naturally turned to the Education Department and asked it to undertake a work for which he conceived it was extremely well fitted. There was a further advantage in such a simple proposal. This money, be it remembered, was not to be provided from local resources, but from the revenue of the country, and in those circumstances surely the control over the expenditure of the money should rest with the central authority representing the Government. They ought to control the expenditure of their own money. When ratepayers' money was expended it was reasonable that the ratepayers should control the expenditure; similarly when the money of the taxpayers was expended the right and reasonable thing was that the central authority, as representing the ratepayers, should have the control. How was the money to be expended? Not indiscriminately. It was to be applied for the relief of necessitous schools and to increase their educational efficiency, and in its application due regard was to be paid to the keeping up of voluntary subscriptions. The Education Department might in performing their task look for help to associations of schools. Such associations existed already to a not inconsiderable extent, and it was proposed to encourage their formation and enlargement. That would be done with all due regard to the religious convictions of those who maintained any particular Voluntary School. He thought it would be generally admitted that it would be little less than an outrage to force a school connected with a particular religious denomination into an association of which the general feeling was not in harmony with the views of that denomination. But generally it would be greatly to the advantage of schools and conduce to efficient discrimination if they were encouraged to join such associations. When such an association was formed there would be allotted to it a certain share of the aid grant according to the number of all the scholars in all the schools in the association. The rate according to which that share would be allotted would be 5s. per child, or if separate rates should be established by the Department for town and country schools, according to those rates respectively. That there was good ground for giving the Department power so to discriminate he should be prepared to prove when the proper time came. The share allotted to each association would be distributed in aid of necessitous schools with due regard to the maintenance of voluntary subscriptions, and it would be distributed by the Department according to the draft scheme which the association would be expected to prepare. Surely this was right? Some schools were rich and needed no help, whilst others were poor and needed help badly. Was it not reasonable that out of their share of the aid grant the managers of wealthy schools should minister to the necessities of other schools? Then he held that the abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit in the case of day schools was right. The grants could be earned only if the school was efficient enough to merit it. In the name of common sense, why should they penalise economy? If a school with smaller subscriptions was turning out an equally good article as a richer school, why should it not get the same amount of grant as was given to that school which possibly had had to spend a great deal more money in order to earn it? Surely it was also right that Voluntary Schools should be relieved from rates. Chapels, museums, scientific and literary institutions were exempted; and our Voluntary Schools were doing work which, in its nature, was a sacred work, and which, in many cases, was more valuable than that done by scientific and literary institutions. Such were the provisions of the Measure now under consideration, and it was a Measure of vast importance. He made no appeal to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite for their support, although he might reasonably make such an appeal if any importance could be attached to the views expressed by the Opposition in the course of the Debate on the Education Bill of last Session. Of the many things of the same sort that were said, he would only quote one. Speaking on the Second Reading of that Measure the right hon. Member for East Fife said:—

> "We were told in the Speech from the Throne that the position of Voluntary Schools is in many places precarious and requires further assistance from public resources. If this Bill had corresponded to the terms of that announcement—if, in other words, it had proposed some additional and even large provision from public resources to maintain a high standard of education where at present it is unduly low, and if that provision had been accompanied by adequate safeguards—[*Opposition cheers*]—for the control and the wise expenditure of the money that was granted, although we might have differed, and probably should have differed upon points of detail, it certainly would not have encountered the resistance which this Measure must be prepared to meet."

["Hear, hear!"] Right hon. Gentlemen opposite had cheered at the words "adequate safeguards." If that was the point on which they wanted light, why did not they reserve their criticisms until they saw the Bill? Now all the expectations held out by right hon. and hon. Members opposite last year were, it appeared, to be thrown to the winds, and the supporters of the Bill were to encounter an opposition as determined as that which met the previous Bill. It was impossible to please hon. Members opposite. If the Government introduced a large Measure they were told that it was too big; if they introduced a smaller Measure they were told that it was too small. The only course that the Government could reasonably take in these circumstances was to give up all idea of meeting the views of hon. Members opposite and to introduce a Measure which they believed to be right. He, therefore, made no appeal to the Opposition for help in this matter, but he thought that the Government were entitled to the loyal support of the Gentlemen who sat on the Benches behind them. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] He could understand the rapture with which hon. Members opposite hailed any symptom of a possible rift in the lute. He quite understood the disappointment which some of his hon. Friends felt because this Bill could not be passed in time to give Voluntary Schools the benefit of the quarter's grant for the financial year now current. He thought, however, that that feeling of disappointment arose from a misconception. The Bill of last year proposed to give the Voluntary Schools 4s.; the present Bill proposed to give them 5s. Therefore, in the first 12 months, dating from April 1, during which the Bill would be in operation, the Voluntary Schools would get the amount which they would have earned under the Bill of last Session, if it had passed, in the course of the 15 months beginning on January 1. But this was really understating the case, because under this Bill the grant would be estimated on an increased number of scholars, and so the Voluntary Schools would actually profit by the alteration made in the Bill of this year, for owing to the increase in the number of scholars the schools would receive, taken together, £616,000 as against £489,000 which they would have received under the Bill of last year. It should be borne in mind also that in any circumstances it would have been impossible to make any discrimination with regard to the distribution of the grant during the last quarter of this financial year. If the money had been paid away during this quarter it would have had to be paid to schools alike without that discrimination which the Government took to be the essence of the question. He appealed to his hon. Friends and to all those whose minds were open on this subject not to let a great cause be prejudiced by any feeling of disappointment, or by any difference on matters of detail or procedure. This Measure was concerned with a great cause; it was the cause of religious freedom and religious equality. ["Oh, oh!" *and cheers.*] They respected the views of those who were satisfied with the religious education given in the Board Schools; but they also respected the views of those who desired religious education of a different kind, and the Government thought that there ought to be fair play all round. They had now a favourable combination of circumstances for rendering substantial service to those Voluntary Schools which had done so brave a work. They had a favourable revenue—[*ironical cheers*]—they had a friendly Government. Let all those who were interested in the welfare of the Voluntary Schools therefore join together as one man in pushing forward a proposal which the Government believed, not only to be right in itself, but one for the benefit of Voluntary Schools which was practicable in existing circumstances. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. A. C. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomery) stated that the proposals of the Government would be opposed by him to the utmost of his power. He did not look upon the abolition of rating as a serious consequence except that it implied the general principle of giving directly or indirectly religious instruction out of the rates. On that ground he objected to it, but as a practical matter he did not apprehend that it might cause serious difficulties. He thought, however, that its tendency might be to strengthen the claim which the community had on the Voluntary Schools because it would bring the community in as the creditors of those schools when the time came to deal with them in a different manner from that which was now being pursued. As to the 17s. 6d. limit, he agreed that to penalise a school simply because it had managed with scanty resources and by economy to earn a satisfactory grant was impolitic. The 17s. 6d. limit, however, consecrated the principle of local contribution, and its abolition, therefore, greatly changed the character of the schools. The provision as to audit by the Education Department was good as far as it went, but he hoped that it would be a real and effectual audit, such an audit as that which was given by the Local Government Board to County Council accounts. The grant of 5s. per child would not be nearly enough to help the poorer country schools up to anything like a high standard of efficiency. He should also like to know something of the machinery, constitution, and working of the proposed associations. His experience of country business was that the number of men who would do work of this kind was limited, and the amount of time at their disposal was pretty heavily drawn upon at present. He doubted whether there would be a sufficient number of men of experience in business to carry out the work, and the consequence would be that it would fall a great deal too much into the hands of the clergy. Business which was exclusively conducted by the clergy would not command the confidence even of Churchmen, and the real objection to the whole of this arrangement was that it placed the control of the funds which were intended to be applied for schools at which all children attended in the hands of one religious body. The association in short would be a Committee of the diocesan conference. He acknowledged that the Voluntary Schools conducted by the clergy were in many cases conducted with great toleration and a fair regard to the feelings of Nonconformist parents, but what was objected to was the entire absence of local control. Local control was wanted, not so much to ensure the right expenditure of money, as to ensure protection against interference with the Conscience Clause, interference with the religious belief of the parents of children, and generally against an intolerance which was in too many cases the characteristic of the working of clerical schools. Both the Solicitor General and his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge University had been misled by the jingle of State Aid, State Control, Rate Aid, Local Control. The latter, for the reason he had given, was necessary whether the aid was local or Imperial. As an illustration he took a case from his own constituency, which was an extensive county. In one part of the county there was a solid block of 155,000 acres, with a population of 24,000, and a rateable value of £7 18s. per head, which would be recognised as a high rateable value. In the whole of this area there was not a single Board School or British School; they were all Church Schools. Something like a half of the population of this large area were Nonconformists, and they had no security whatever except the good feeling of the parson of the parish that their children would be saved from being proselytised. He compared this district with an area of the same county consisting of parishes where there were Board Schools or British Schools. The latter area had a rateable value of £129,000, and a population of 24,466, making the rateable value per head £4 17s. 6d. In the first block he had mentioned there were 2,508 children in average attendance, and the district would therefore have a grant of £627 per annum. In the other area there were 3,515 children in average attendance, of whom only 1,343 were in non-Board Schools; so while the area with a rateable value of £7 18s. per head would get £627, that with a value of only £4 17s. 6d. per head, though more populous, would only get £336. There was no reason whatever for the inequality of treatment as between Board and Voluntary Schools, because the Board Schools were as much the result of the Voluntary efforts of the people as the Church Schools were. The Board Schools were established with the full assent and consent of the people who set them up. They all knew the great inequality in the pressure of taxation as between rateable and other property, but to accentuate this inequality by relieving the ratepayers of the towns more largely than the ratepayers of the country was only one more instance of the extremely retrograde nature of this Measure. In short, this Measure was simply and avowedly one for the endowment of the Church. That was the long and the short of the whole business. The whole argument of the Solicitor General pointed in this direction. In his opinion the hon. and learned Gentleman had somewhat exaggerated the extent to which conscience operated to induce parents to send their children to Voluntary Schools. He did not think the Voluntary Schools were preferred because the parents craved for definite religious instruction, as it was called; it was because they dreaded the rates. Whenever there was a fight whether there should be a School Board or not, one did not hear anything said about religion; one only heard the argument that to have no School Board would save the rates. He believed the religious instruction given in the Board Schools was acceptable to the great majority of the parents, and for his part he had greater sympathy with the consciences of those who did not wish to have dogmatic teaching forced upon their children, than of those who wished to force dogmatic teaching upon people who did not want it.

On the return of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, after the usual interval,

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said the announcement that, contrary to public expectation, the grant in aid of the Voluntary Schools was not to be made available during the current financial year would cause great regret to both Churchmen and educationalists throughout the country; and, knowing as he did that Voluntary Schools urgently needed assistance, he thought there was some ground for complaint against the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] He regarded the question of education as the most vital question of the day, and therefore one to be considered entirely from a national standpoint. ["Hear, hear!"] His right hon. Friend the Member for Dartford had reproached some supporters of the Government for being too critical in this matter. But education transcended in importance every party question; and, in his opinion, those did best for their party who, in dealing with such an important question, endeavoured to do the best for the State. Therefore, in the interest of the State, he would follow some of his hon. Friends in a friendly criticism of the proposals of the Government, hoping that those proposals might yet be modified in some important points of detail. Education was the great national need of the day. A commercial standpoint was not, perhaps, the highest ground from which to view education, but it was one which in these days of commercial rivalry between nations could not be altogether neglected. He believed that if the matter were thoroughly investigated it would be found that any want of success on the part of the people of this country in holding their own against the commercial competition of other nations was entirely due to their deficiencies in education. In the laxity of the State in not providing the means of primary education until 1870—for what had been done before that date was not of any moment—as contrasted with the educational efforts during the last hundred years of countries like Germany, was to be found the chief cause of the success of foreign competition. Our national system of education rested upon two classes of schools—the Voluntary and the Board. He regarded both classes of schools as complementary parts of our national system of education, and thought that both should have full justice done to them. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Ipswich had said that Voluntary Schools were devoted not to education but to theology. That phrase, he thought, showed a great want of knowledge of the history of Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] It ought to be remembered that the Voluntary Schools were alone, for a long period, doing the work of education for the people of this country, while other countries were working at State education. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why?] Because the State was neglecting its duty. Apart from history, however, without the Voluntary Schools they would have to find room for 2½ million scholars, and what an expense in buildings, capital, and income that would entail. He believed that the best expenditure we could make was on education, but the chief danger with the ratepayers to-day was lest there should be a reaction against education owing to its cost. The worst blow, therefore, that they could strike at educational progress would be to cast such a burden on the ratepayers as would be involved in dispensing with Voluntary Schools, or in allowing them to die. Moreover, the great portion of the nation demanded these schools. He did not think that dogmatic theology was in any sense the best training for children, but they could not shut their eyes to the fact that a vast number of people thought that no education was complete unless it was based upon religion. Voluntary Schools were therefore necessary. He wished equally that the Board Schools should be maintained in efficiency; he knew their great value, at any rate in our large towns, and the worst thing they could do for education would be to limit in any way their operations. He was in favour of largely increasing the resources of the Board Schools rather than limiting them. He believed that in education equality was equity, and the best way of maintaining the Board School system in the ultimate interest of the Voluntary Schools themselves was by equality of treatment. He thought the Church had most to fear in the end from a departure from the compromise of 1870. The Solicitor General had said that one object of this Bill was to redress the inequality between the Voluntary and Board Schools, and he pointed out that £40,000 a year might be expended on Board Schools. But this Bill proposed to give £650,000 a year to the Voluntary Schools, and, therefore, so far from redressing the inequality, it created a new inequality. [*Opposition cheers.*] He regretted that they were not dealing with both classes of schools at the same time on equal lines; and if it were yet possible to do so, he believed that would be the best mode of complying with the wishes of the country. He thought it was a matter of profound regret to many of them that this differential treatment should have been entered upon when a permanent settlement might have been arrived at. He could not help noticing in some of the speeches which had been delivered, and in the Resolution, a strong tendency towards the very dangerous doctrine of differential treatment. The right hon. Member for Bodmin had spoken of poor districts in Cornwall, and there were similar lands in Yorkshire which would receive no aid, while other districts round about would receive considerable aid. They might regret the fact, even if it were necessary, that, whereas Manchester would get very large sums, the equally poor schools languishing in the densely crowded districts of our metropolis would receive comparatively small aid. London would receive much less than Manchester, and towns and districts which paid their own rates would have to contribute through their taxes to the maintenance of the Voluntary Schools in other parts. ["Hear, hear!"] These and other differences of treatment would render this Bill difficult of operation. He thought that a voluntary association would have great difficulty in deciding the difference of grant between different schools, and that there would be very considerable dissension in consequence. The better course would have been to deal simultaneously with both classes of schools. The Voluntary Schools required help, and it should be given them upon conditions, the primary one being the representation of parents upon the management—[*Opposition cheers*]—and that would also have been to choose the line of least resistance. They must remember that if the schools had not to pay the rates the ratepayers would have to make up the difference; and that seemed to him to establish an additional claim to their supervision of the work done by the schools. He did not see that it was at all necessary that the control of the grant should be with the Education Department, for what they wanted in dealing with the details of education was local knowledge and sympathy. He was certain that the great want in our education was sympathy at home with the education of the children. He had represented the opinion of his constituents in this matter. His constituency had discussed this question, and the majority of the clergymen there had determined that, in the interests of the Church and education, it would be wise to have some representation of the parents on the management of the schools. In such a case there was no need for two Bills; the condition was not an objectionable one, and a Measure embodying it might have passed rapidly, and even before the termination of the present financial year. One could not but regret that education was again thrown into the cauldron of theological and political disputation. Instead of all parties recognising the vast necessity which existed for supporting and improving our forms of education, instead of realising that it was our great want at present that we had not that education which would fit us for competition with other nations, we were having bitter discussions, with the ultimate result that no adequate grant was forthcoming this year either for Voluntary or necessitous Board Schools. In this matter simultaneity and spontaneity would have been principles well worthy on application by the Treasury Bench.

Mr. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) did not believe a greater surprise was ever sprung on the House of Commons than when the First Lord of the Treasury, replying to a question yesterday, announced that the grant in aid of Voluntary Schools would not take effect during the present financial year. Nobody in the country or in the House had, before that reply, received the faintest hint that such was the intention of the Government, and up to the present hour the Treasury Bench had not deigned to offer the slightest atom of explanation of the grounds on which they had departed from a policy which had been accepted as settled by the whole of the country during the whole of the autumn and winter. Why were they asked to come here a month earlier than usual if this Bill was not to be passed before the end of the financial year? No one could say a justification was to be found in the programme of the Government, for no Government, particularly one with such a majority as the present, ever commenced a Session with so meagre a programme. He accused the Government of a breach of pledge, for they distinctly said, when the Bill of last year was dropped, that the money was earmarked, and was lying in the Exchequer for the Voluntary Schools, and would not be devoted to the reduction of the National Debt. Speaking, in the course of the Budget speech, of the Education Bill of last year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said there was a surplus of £433,000, out of which he proposed to provide for any charge that would be placed on the Exchequer by that Bill, and, the right hon. Gentleman added, after that charge was defrayed, a modest surplus would remain. They were now told by the First Lord of the Treasury that the calculation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that if the Bill of last year had passed, only £100,000 would have come to the Voluntary Schools. [The Chancellor of the Exchequer: "£120,000."] He could not understand why the sum was so small. They were told the Bill would not have come into operation until the 1st of January of this year, but if that were so the solicitude of the Government for the Voluntary Schools contrasted very unfavourably with their solicitude for the agriculturists of the country. It was all very fine for the Government to say they had raised the grant from 4s. to 5s. Yes, but last year everybody was a friend of the Voluntary Schools, and even many Members on the Opposition side of the House declared that 4s. was absolutely inadequate. It was mean and shabby to the Voluntary Schools to deprive them of the £120,000 which the Government gave a distinct pledge was earmarked for them.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I do not think the hon. Gentleman really understands the situation. Under our Bill of last year it was proposed, and we should have adhered to the proposal, to give 4s. per head to the children in Voluntary Schools. That would have involved a payment of one-quarter of that sum in the current year and 4s. in the year 1897-98, or 5s. per head in all. That is precisely the sum we propose to give under this Bill, only it will all be paid in 1897-98 instead of a quarter in 1896-97 and the rest in 1897-98.

MR. DILLON said he did not believe that if the Bill of last year had been passed it would have been possible for the Government to have stood by the 4s. grant, for not a single supporter of the Government supported the 4s. grant. Their view of the present Bill must be altogether in view of the declarations of the Government. If the Bill had been a short Bill intended to give the Voluntary Schools in the present financial year the money they lost by the withdrawal of last year's Bill, it would have been passed, he believed, in a very few days. The Government, however, had introduced a Measure which must be regarded as their Education Bill for the year, because, although they spoke vaguely of introducing another Bill in the course of the Session for the purpose of giving grants to necessitous Board Schools, anyone who had listened to the language used yesterday by the First Lord of the Treasury, or who read his remarks in *The Times* to-day, would be forced to the conclusion that this Bill was the Government Education Bill for the Session. There was not a shadow of a chance of the Bill slipping rapidly through all its stages, because by divorcing the grant to Voluntary Schools from that to necessitous Board Schools, the opposition to the Measure had been enormously increased. In his opinion the fate of the Bill had been seriously endangered by the policy and conduct of the Government. It would be idle for the friends of the Voluntary Schools—and he spoke as a friend of them—to shut their eyes to the serious issues which had been raised by the new departure of the Government. The Bill had to be considered, not from the point of view of a temporary Measure, but from the point of view of a permanent Measure, of a Measure giving a grant of £600,000 to the Voluntary Schools for ever, and giving it without any satisfactory pledge that a corresponding grant would be offered to the necessitous Board Schools. That, he believed, would be a disastrous position in which to place the Voluntary Schools. As to the merits of the Bill itself, he would say, without hesitation, speaking on behalf of the Catholic Schools, that it was a great improvement on the Bill of last year, because it offered those schools a grant of 1s. a head more than the previous Measure. As far as they could understand the explanation of the First Lord of the Treasury, the result of the Government proposal would be to give to the really poor schools—and all Catholic Schools were poor schools—something more than 5s. a head, probably an average of 6s. The abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit was an advantage, but he regretted that the Government had not proposed to abolish the provision against unnecessary schools, a provision which was odious to Catholics at any rate. Still, the Bill offered considerable advantages, and so far as it affected Catholic Schools it would receive no opposition from him and those around him. At the same time, they could not forget that the case of the Catholic Schools was unfortunately tied up with that of the Protestant Church Schools, and no doubt the Bill as it stood would inflict grave injustice on large districts in the country—giving grants to one district and not to another, to parishes which needed no help; and to others, which sorely needed help, none at all. [" Hear, hear! "] No one could deny that the Nonconformists suffered from grievances in the country districts, but the Nonconformists would be the first to admit that the claims of the Catholic Schools in no way touched those grievances. The present Bill, however, made no pretence to remove those grievances, and he contended that if the object of the Measure was to secure just treatment for the Voluntary Schools as a whole, the wise policy would have been to insert something in the Bill which would have disarmed opposition and have given a *quid pro quo* to the Nonconformists. The Catholic leaders and the Catholic people in this country had been in favour of dealing with this question in a broad and generous spirit, and of removing grievances wherever they existed. But this Bill set up fresh grievances, and therefore it was not calculated to remedy existing injustice. Nevertheless, he should support the Bill. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] Indeed, he was bound to do so, in consideration of the increased grant it gave to the Catholic Schools—to those poor schools which were only maintained by armies of collectors, who gathered, Sunday after Sunday, the pence of the poor for the purpose. At the same time he regarded the policy of the Government, from the point of view of the Voluntary Schools generally, as very unsatisfactory and dangerous to the best interests of those schools. What was the history of the question? Just before the General Election of 1895—on the eve of the fall of the late Government—Lord Salisbury, speaking, he thought, in London, and also *The Times* in a leading article commenting on his Lordship's speech, gave advice to the friends of the Voluntary Schools not to place all their reliance upon a grant from the Imperial Exchequer. On the contrary, they were advised to look to the rates, and both Lord Salisbury and *The Times* said it was the first duty of the friends of the Voluntary Schools to come to an agreement among themselves. But others held the view that there could be no final settlement of the question unless the necessitous Board Schools were dealt with at the same time as Voluntary Schools. The subject was discussed by the country, the Election came on, and hon. Members opposite went to the country, and to a man pledged themselves to endeavour to make it the first business of the Government to do justice to the Voluntary Schools. The Party came back with a majority of 150, but on this question, with the support of the Irish Members, they had a majority of 320. How did they redeem their pledge? The whole question between State aid and rate aid, and the inequality between the two sets of schools, was debated at length in the country, and a remarkable meeting took place at the Church House. At that meeting, acting on the advice of *The Times* and of Lord Salisbury given 18 months before, the representatives of the two archdioceses of this country came to an almost unanimous Resolution, based on what appeared to him to be a just and reasonable proposal for a final settlement of this question, that there should be a grant from the Imperial Exchequer all round, to Board and Voluntary Schools alike, and that in School Board districts Voluntary Schools should be allowed a proportion of the rates. What was the answer after the Church had come round to the Catholic programme, and had adopted the advice of Lord Salisbury? *The Times* stated that the proposal was preposterous, and could not be seriously made. Only that day he laid side by side those two articles from *The Times*—the one written in June, 1895, and the other in November last—and it was almost impossible to imagine that so much audacity could exist even in *The Times.* He looked forward to the future both of this Bill and of the Voluntary Schools with the greatest possible alarm. He intervened in the Debate of last year and pointed out that in his judgment this whole Question was one of friendly negotiation and compromise, and he believed so still. He believed the question would never be settled on any permanent basis until the two opposite parties in that House and in the country entered into friendly negotiation and conference. He believed that the evil which had pursued the Government in their policy of last year and in their policy of this year was that they had brought in a Measure, not of compromise, and resting on what he might describe as give and take, but had sought to pursue a policy of "knifing" their opponents, and of doing injustice. When the Bill of last year was withdrawn on the 23rd of June last, the Leader of the Oppositon made a most remarkable offer of which no notice was taken at the time except to receive it with jeers and contempt. It appeared to him that if that offer had been properly treated it offered a basis of settlement much better, he feared, than the Voluntary Schools would get under the present Bill. The Leader of the Opposition said:—

> "If the Government would now reconsider this matter and would be content to confine this new authority to secondary education, where I dare say it might be highly useful and advantageous if they would give the advantages to Voluntary Schools, which, subject to reasonable conditions we are willing to grant, then they might pass, with the general consent of the House of Commons, and with the approval of the country, an Education Bill which would be useful and permanent."

That was one of the things about which he (Mr. Dillon) was most concerned—that it should be permanent. And, though the "reasonable conditions" of the Leader of the Opposition might have been a matter for difference of opinion, still he was convinced that an arrangement could be arrived at—at least, speaking for the Catholics he knew it could be, because they had never been afraid to trust the parents of the children and public authorities to a very great extent, and give them reasonable control. That offer of the Leader of the Opposition was commented upon in the following language by *The Daily Chronicle* of the following morning—and he took *The Daily Chronicle* because he knew it to be one of the most extreme opponents of the Education Bill of last year, and of this year also:—

> "Sir William Harcourt last night offered a compromise with the purport of which we heartily agree, and which Sir John Gorst did not seem entirely disposed to reject."

The Vice-President of the Council had now disappeared from the scene.

> "Let the anti-School Board part of the Bill be obliterated. Let the Government confine themselves to a simple plan of relief for the Voluntary Schools, by rate aid if they so please, accompanied by adequate popular control."

What did their friend *The Times* say? It spoke then the language of the irreconcilable Members on the Opposition side of the House:—

> "We have never dreamed of suggesting that the vital provisions of the Bill should be exercised while those of less importance should be retained."

It should be remembered that the vital provisions of the Bill were those provided for the purpose of destroying the School Board system, and those of less importance were those giving relief to Voluntary Schools.

> "This is, however, the substance of the 'terms of peace' which Sir William Harcourt offered, with an insulting affectation of seriousness, in the course of his speech on Professor Stuart's Amendment."

The Government had taken Sir William Harcourt's advice too late and insufficiently. They had brought in a Bill in a new, and, to him, a more acceptable shape, but in a shape for another reason likely to give rise to a most furious and, he was afraid, a prolonged opposition. He desired to say one word on the question of popular control. The hon. Member for the Cambridge University (Mr. Jebb) in the speech to which they all listened with intense pleasure, laid down the principle that they had no right—and they had no right—to penalise and to fine children because their parents sent them to schools where dogmatic religion was taught. Until they devised a system under which a child who went to a school where dogmatic religion was taught had equal advantages from the public funds with a child who went to a school where there was no denominational teaching, they could never settle this question. The Catholics, at all events, recognised that one of the essential conditions of such a plan—and it would ultimately have to be devised—was that there should be a system of popular control extended over the schools as was consistent with the preservation of dogmatic teaching. Of course it stood to reason that you could not ask, without self-contradiction and becoming absurd, religious schools to accept control that might take away their religious character; but short of that the Catholics of this country were prepared to accept popular control. He could bring forward many proofs of this from statements of the Bishops and the Cardinal. On May 16, 1896, there was an article in the *Tablet*, supposed to be the organ of Cardinal Vaughan, and mouthpiece of his views, and certainly was not Nationalist. In that article occurred the following passage:—

> "As far as the Opposition is concerned, Mr. Balfour is absolutely master of the situation. Why then is he content to apply what he deliberately admits is an inadequate remedy, when all the while it is in his power to be just to the uttermost farthing? . . The official representatives of the Church of England are afraid to trust the people; they dread the rates because they fear the interference of the ratepayers. It is an odd situation. The Church, which calls itself national, is afraid of the local authorities, while the religious body which is the most unpopular in the land is ready to trust them, and believe they would deal justice to all."

All they asked for was justice and equality. They offered every reasonable control to ratepayers, and if he were asked to-morrow what suggestion he would offer for a settlement of the question, he would say the suggestion put forward and adopted at the Church meeting, on the resolution that increased grants should be made all round to Board and Voluntary Schools, coupled with the warning that in those Board School districts where School Boards would not treat Voluntary Schools fairly, the grants might be withheld. There had been threats that, if Voluntary Schools were allowed to participate in the rates, there were certain men who would go to prison rather than pay the rates; but that he thought unfair and absurd. Suppose Catholics and others had refused payment of rates in that way, where would Board Schools be? It would be perfectly competent for the Government to introduce a Bill which would offer to every School Board in the country grants in aid exactly equal to all schools on this condition, that if a School Board in any district would not give fair play to Voluntary Schools by allowing a maintenance grant equal to that allowed to Board Schools, then the Government grant might be withheld from that district. His conviction was that if this matter were left in the hands of School Boards that the Boards and the managers of Voluntary Schools would pull together more peaceably than many people imagined. The Bill as it stood would have the support of his vote, not without foreboding as to its fate and to its effect if it passed into law. He did not believe the policy of the Government was wise as regarded Voluntary Schools, and he believed it would be injurious to the future of those schools. Last year, when the Government came to the House with an unbroken majority, with a mandate from the country, and high enthusiasm in favour of Voluntary Schools, they could have settled this question on a firm, just, and lasting basis, but they threw away their opportunity then, and he feared they would throw away their opportunity now.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) recognised that the hon. Member represented the Catholic portion of the community, whose sacrifices on behalf of education were well known, and he was glad to hear the hon. Gentleman announce his intention of voting for the Bill in the belief that it would confer large benefits on those he represented. The hon. Gentleman had boasted very largely of the readiness of Roman Catholics to submit to ratepayers' control; but he would like to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he would allow ratepayers a voice in the selection of teachers? ["Hear, hear!"] And also if he thought that ratepayers generally would consider any control adequate which did not give them a voice in the selection of teachers? ["Hear, hear!"] Passing from that, he thought the policy of the Government, as explained in the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, made two things very clear. One was that the Government were fully prepared to carry out the pledges made by their supporters on the hustings to maintain Voluntary Schools, and also that there was no wish on their part to upset the settlement of 1870 on which our educational policy was based. There was a fear last Session in the minds of many on both sides of the House, fostered by some things in the Bill, and various speeches made outside the House, and it was much to have the assurance from his right hon. Friend, given on the previous night. It was not fair to say that while the attack on School Boards last year was open this year it was covert. He did not think there was ground for saying that he saw no possibility of an attack on School Boards under the Bill, and he should have thought this fact would have gone far to remove opposition to the Measure. These two facts enabled him to give his hearty support to the Bill, and he had hoped that after statements made over and over again by hon. Members opposite, a simple Measure to give relief to Voluntary Schools would have had their support, and that both Parties might have co-operated for this end, and that with a moderate amount of discussion the Bill would have become law. As regards the Unionist Party, he believed they were steeped to the eyes in pledges to support Voluntary Schools, and to do their utmost to remove a strain upon those schools well nigh unbearable. To the promises made, the present position of the Party in the House was largely due. The people of England felt very strongly in regard to Voluntary Schools, and the importance of religious education for their children, and preferred the personal religious instruction Voluntary Schools offered. All interested in education had admitted again and again that variety of management was desirable, and that healthy competition between Board and Voluntary Schools advanced the cause of education, whilst there was also the fear, which was present to them, of the large charge, amounting to millions, that must be cast upon the rates and upon education if the Voluntary Schools were wiped out of existence. That being the opinion strongly held on that side of the House he did not see how they could recede from the position they had taken up and decline to afford that substantial measure of aid to Voluntary Schools which was proposed to be given under the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] It was proposed that the assistance should be given in a discriminating manner so that those who needed it might have help, and those who did not should not have it. He would ask the House could the Government have done less than they had done after all they had said in view of the great urgency of the case and of the greatness of the need at the present time? Right hon. Gentlemen opposite had spoken of the injustice that was to be done to the Board Schools. Where was the injustice that was involved in the matter? Was it unfair to give additional State aid to the Voluntary Schools under the present circumstances? No doubt, at first under the settlement it was intended that there should be exact equality between the schools in this matter. But if ever there was equality it had practically ceased by the enormous increase of the expenditure involved in education, and equality had ceased in this way: the Board Schools had rates to draw upon to an unlimited extent, whereas the Voluntary Schools had no increased facilities to draw upon to meet their increased expenditure. Something was necessary to be done to redress this balance of inequality which had been growing and increasing so much. Perhaps the rate might be delightful in theory, but there were two obstacles in the way. One was the Nonconformist conscience, which would not tolerate paying the rates for the maintenance of denominational schools, and also the Ratepayers' Association which had put its foot down so firmly to resist any further charges upon the rates. Therefore, if additional aid was to be given to redress the inequality which at present existed they could only fall back upon an additional grant from the State. He quite admitted the hardship of the poor Board Schools, but with them it was not a question of existence, it was a question of efficiency. With the Voluntary Schools, on the contrary, it was a question of existence. The Board Schools could afford to wait a short time till the pledges of the Government could be fulfilled. This demand on behalf of rich and powerful communities that they should have more from the State in aid of the Board Schools than they now received was to him a new idea to a large extent. It had often been urged in that Debate as if the Board Schools received nothing at the present time from the State except the large grants given from the Exchequer. As regarded the poor and necessitous Board Schools he hoped it would be recognised that the Government were in earnest when they introduced the question last year before which time very little was heard on the subject. He trusted the friends of such schools would be satisfied with these promises, and would wait a reasonable time till their demands could be fairly met. He could only state it was his hearty intention to support this Measure. The question of the existence of Voluntary Schools had become a burning one, and whatever might be done in that House he believed the Government in their honest attempt to give that relief to Voluntary Schools which they so greatly needed would have the cordial and generous support of the country.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar), congratulated the Government on the fact that the right hon. Baronet on this occasion was able to give them his support, though he was bound to say he was not able to agree with him in the reasons he gave for according that support. He understood the argument of the right hon. Baronet was that the compromise of 1870 would not be affected by the Bill, that the educational position would not be materially altered and that, therefore, this Bill ought to pass the House of Commons. Their position on that side of the House was this: In the first place they did not in the least know what the Government were going to do in regard to their further instalment in education. All they did know was they were going to vote £600,000 to Voluntary Schools. They did not know whether the proposals of the Government in regard to the Board Schools would involve the sum of £50,000 under Section 97 of the old Act or whether it was really going to be substantially an equivalent grant to the Board Schools in the future. Until they were certain they were going to receive justice as between the different classes of schools in this matter they were not able to swallow this Bill without comment and without opposition. He was bound to say the speech of the Solicitor General made them feel that as regarded the Board Schools the further Bill which the Government had been promising would be, as far as they were concerned, totally inadequate to meet the case. The Solicitor General and the right hon. Gentleman who had last spoken, talked of the poorer School Board districts and necessitous Board Schools. But he, for one, considered there were large towns where the rates were very heavy for educational purposes, such as London, Birmingham, and elsewhere, which were quite as much in need and deserved as much consideration as some of the poorer School Board districts, and unless these towns were dealt with on terms of equality and justice they should certainly not be satisfied with the proposals of the Government. The Bill of last year was supported chiefly on three grounds. In the first place it was stated that the Department was over-worked, and therefore there ought to be a considerable amount of decentralisation. Under the proposal of the Government, as they understood it, the work of the Department would not be diminished by one iota, while all the difficulties of distinguishing between rural and urban schools, and dealing with the new association schools would be cast on the shoulders of an already over-burdened Department. The second reason was, that rural Voluntary Schools and the smaller Board Schools were in such a state of inefficiency that they required levelling up to a better standard. As regarded this Bill, the smaller Board Schools got nothing, and the rural districts less than the urban. The chief argument in support of the Bill was that the burden of Voluntary Schools had become so intolerable that they must give them substantial relief. The Bill did not relieve those upon whom the greatest strain existed—who had to pay high rates. This Debate and that of last year, showed that there was no hostility on the Liberal Benches towards Voluntary Schools. Whatever they might have thought on that side of the House years ago, they all now admitted that the Voluntary system was a necessary portion of our great educational system and ought to be properly supported. It gave variety and some advantages that, at all events on the lowest ground—that of cost—it was agreed that the extinction of the Voluntary Schools was out of the question. They also agreed that some Voluntary Schools were in a destitute condition and required more assistance than other schools in other parts of the Kingdom. Last year the Government defined Voluntary Schools as belonging to three classes. The first class consisted of necessitous schools where the rates and subscriptions were high. But under this Bill the rates would not be diminished, and the subscriptions, though high, would not be reduced in larger proportion than elsewhere. The second class of necessitous schools were those which were small and in rural districts, where the cost of management was out of proportion to the income of the school. As regards these, they were told that they would receive a lower grant than schools in urban districts which required it less. In the third place, they were told that Roman Catholic schools were among the most necessitous. He believed everyone wanted to give generous treatment to Roman Catholic schools, which had a special interest in the denominational question, and were unquestionably among the poorest schools. While admitting that Voluntary Schools deserved support, and that there was a considerable number of necessitous Voluntary Schools, he contested the argument that the Voluntary Schools, as a whole, required exceptional treatment, and should receive separate and larger grants which were not equally extended to Board Schools. As the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton had pointed out, the Voluntary Schools were not diminishing in numbers or attendance, but increasing. In London, where the strain upon them was greatest because the subscriptions were larger and the School Board rate heavier than in any other town in the Kingdom, instead of diminishing the Voluntary Schools were increasing, and instead of being squeezed out were in a stronger position than they ever were before in the history of education. While there were 400,000 children in the Board Schools in London, the number in the Voluntary Schools was larger by many thousands, and had increased by some thousands during the past year. As regarded the financial position of the Voluntary Schools, taking the Church of England Schools altogether, while the burden of subscriptions had only increased in the last 15 years by £40,000, they were receiving a grant of no less than £640,000 a year and educating 430,000 children a year. Neither as regarded the strain upon them nor their financial position was a separate grant to Voluntary Schools justified without giving an equivalent grant to Board Schools. It had been pointed out how unequal the proposal of the Government would work in regard to the grant. While in London £70,000 would be received less than schools in Lancashire, Londoners paid in rates for education £2,250,000 a year, against the small sum paid by those who received a larger amount. The only guarantee there had been for some years against the disappearance of subscriptions had been the so-called 17s. 6d. limit, and though he agreed that that particular system had great evils, and, in some cases, caused great hardship, at the same time it was the one guarantee that the large amount of annual subscriptions—£840,000—should not disappear. Therefore the Opposition would certainly scrutinise the Bill very carefully to see whether there was any real guarantee that the amount proposed to be given to Voluntary Schools would really go towards increased efficiency in these schools, and in no sense towards a diminution of subscriptions. He would ask the Government, if the plan was that the subscriptions should go on and that the extra assistance should all go to increase the efficiency of education in Voluntary Schools, what became of the cry of the intolerable strain? The old cry was against a high rate and heavy subscriptions; but if nothing was to be done to reduce the subscriptions, what was to become of the cry of the intolerable strain? Taking the proposal as a whole, the Opposition could not help opposing it, because it seemed unjust as between the different forms and classes of schools, because it settled nothing and unsettled everything, and would do a great deal to destroy and diminish education by putting Board Schools in an inferior position to Voluntary Schools, and by raising, in an aggravated form, all those denominational and theological questions which have for so many years delayed the progress of education in this country.

MR. LUCAS-SHADWELL (Hastings) thought there been an unnecessary amount of criticism of the Measure from Members on the Ministerial side of the House, and he would not follow the example that had been set in that respect. He did not regard this proposal as in any way a final settlement of the Education Question. He regarded it as an instalment, and he hoped it was an earnest of benefits yet to come. After the experience of last Session, he was not surprised that the Government had not seen their way to introduce a comprehensive Measure instead of dealing with the Voluntary Schools alone. He had been somewhat surprised to learn the enthusiasm aroused by the School Board system in some hon. Members on his side of the House. He had no desire to attack School Boards, but he could not feel any enthusiasm for the system. He believed it was in many ways a bad system, and that School Boards had gone in for a great deal of unnecessary extravagance, and he believed they would have been more injurious to the education of the country had it not been that Conservative Churchmen had made it their duty to take an active part in School Board work. He looked upon the present Bill as an improvement on the Bill of last year, inasmuch as it gave 1s. more to the Voluntary Schools, and he believed the managers would be grateful for it. He was glad to see also that under the Bill there would be great inducements to Voluntary Schools to associate. The abolition of the 17s. 6d. limit would, he thought, be a great benefit. It had undoubtedly acted hitherto as a great discouragement to deserving schools, and was contrary to the principle of payment by results. He was also glad to know that school buildings were to be exempted from rates. There was, no doubt, much to be said in favour of the relief of necessitous Board Schools, and the Government had promised at a later date to introduce a Measure for that purpose; but Board Schools were in a very different position from Voluntary Schools, as they could go to the ratepayers for money whenever they wanted it. The Church Schools in this country had done a great work, and he believed that this Bill would greatly encourage their managers and enable them to keep the schools going.

*Mr. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL (Fife, W.) said that, coming as he did from a country where there were universal School Boards, tempered only by the "Shorter Catechism"—a document for which he should feel bound to express more respect than he really entertained, were it not for the undoubted historical fact that it was an article of foreign importation, having stamped upon it the odious words, "Made in England"—he approached this thorny question in a more open state of mind, and was able to detect, perhaps, a certain amount of humbug on both sides. He was very much struck by a remark made by the hon. Member for Wigan, that a great number of children in that part of the country daily attended Church Schools, and nevertheless on Sunday went to a Nonconformist Sunday School.

Sir FRANCIS POWELL: My remark did not apply only to Wigan, but was general, and applied to the whole country.

*Mr. BIRRELL said the comment he made on that observation, now known to be true of all parts of the country—[*laughter*]—was this—what a slipshod, unscientific, invertebrate, and, he would add, undenominational kind of religious education must that be which, given on five or six days of the week in these Church Schools all over England, yet left the children perfectly free on the Sunday, without any mental discomfort, without any moral queasyness, without certainly any painful dislocation of faith, to leave this sacramental atmosphere of the Church School and go on Sunday to some Baptist or Congregational place of instruction. [*Laughter.*] He believed that to be absolutely true—[*cheers*]—and it proved that this so-called religious difficulty did not exist, and that this miserable attempt to divide the children of this country into two hostile camps scowling at each other for the love of God was a perfect sham and an imposture. [*Cheers.*] The fact was that, with the exception of the Roman Catholics and the Jews, the great bulk of the people who sent their children to these schools, so far as they thought at all upon religious questions, thought alike, and very rarely entered into the domain of controversial theology. He had known himself a great number of children who had been taught in excellent Elementary Church Schools and who yet remained—dear little things—as ignorant of the Pauline theology as even the right hon. Member for London University would wish them to be. [*Laughter.*] He doubted very much whether of the Members of the House, all of whom had had a secondary education, there were three who could write an essay of as many pages on, say, the doctrine of the Trinity without falling on one side or the other into the most horrible heresy, which in better ages or happier days they must have expiated with their lives. [*Laughter.*] The fact was these things were not taught by religious teachers of any sense in any school. The present Archbishop of Canterbury once kept a school, a place of secondary education, but on denominational lines. He preached in the college chapel sermons which powerfully influenced for good the minds of the young fellows who listened to him. He had published a selection of these sermons under the title "Rugby Sermons," and he (Mr. Birrell) defied any Member of the House, simply from a perusal of these sermons, to gain any notion whatever as to what the Archbishop of Canterbury—he did not say now, but then—thought on these doctrinal points which separated Churches. This was not because he was without a dogmatic creed, but because he was a schoolmaster who knew his business. ["Hear, hear!"] The House ought, without difficulty and without much distinction of party, to have simply one object in view in all these educational questions, and that was to see that the secular education of the children of this country was carried on in well-built sanitary schools, supplied by well-trained and, therefore, well-paid and independent teachers—["hear, hear!"]—who were equipped with all the necessary tools of their most distinguished science. No parent obviously should be compelled by law to send his child to an ill-built, ill-taught, or ill-equipped school. ["Hear, hear!"] But when there was a choice between two schools, each of which satisfied these tests, it seemed to him pedantic tyranny to prevent a parent from choosing which of the two he would send his child to, or to punish him in any way for that choice. The only persons at present aggrieved in this respect were the Nonconformists in the 8,000 parishes in which there were none but Church Schools. Churchmen had recognised this grievance but had not suggested any way by which it should be remedied. It was said truly that some Voluntary Schools were very hard put to it to carry on their work, and that they could only keep their heads above water by mendicancy, and by sending round the hat with a vehemence which was hardly consistent with their Christian character. The stress upon the Voluntary Schools was a stress put upon them by the Education Department, and the schools in the poor School Board districts suffered from precisely the same disease. The only difference between the two cases was that the Voluntary Schools could not find the money because their friends were not well enough off to supply it, whilst the Board Schools could not find the money because the rates did not provide it. To talk as the Solicitor General had done about the "bottomless purse of the ratepayer" was a form of playful extravagance which he might, having regard to the gravity of the rest of the speech, have denied himself. [*Laughter.*] Why did one kind of school poverty call for immediate relief more than the other? As a lover of education he did not wish to see the schools of the country starved or stinted. He was one of those extraordinary people who thought that enough money was not spent on either Board Schools or Voluntary Schools. Far too little money was spent on the preservation of the mind of the nation. The breed of the nation was no doubt equally important, but he did not see what that House was to do to improve that. [*Laughter.*] It was a saying of the greatest man who ever held a seat in that House—Francis Bacon—that the mind and breed of the nation were the only two things that intelligent politicians should concern themselves with. Under our present system, though there was hardship in both cases, the poor School Board district suffered most. In a poor School Board district the wretched parent was rated up to the eyes for an inefficient education, whilst in a purely voluntary district the parent paid no rate, nor did he as a rule contribute at all to the support of the school, being content to leave that operation to the religious zeal or political partisanship of his betters. Therefore, the stress upon the poor really fell with greater heaviness in a poor School Board district than in a district where there were only Voluntary Schools. The Bill of the Government he approached with somewhat the same feeling of astonishment as he was constantly in during the discussions on the Measure of last Session. Honestly, he could not make out what Ministers were at. He would have thought that, given a popular Tory Minister who was a sound Churchman, when in England at all events—[*laughter*]—and given a large Tory majority, the first thing Ministers would have done would have been so to buttress and fortress the Voluntary Schools as to place them upon a financial basis which would have made them perfectly independent for all time, and that, having made them safe, he would have left the

School Board system alone, a system which, though only 25 years old, was deeply rooted in the respect and esteem of the community, and have done nothing to raise the faintest suspicion of unfairness of treatment. The Bill, however, that was introduced last year wounded the pride of the School Boards and did not fill the pockets of the Voluntary Schools. It had, therefore, comparatively few friends and died ignominiously by the roadside. Now that the Bill was dead he noticed that there was an inclination in some quarters to say something in commendation of it, and he should follow that example. Although it was a bad and ill-conceived Bill, it contained evidence that the persons who constructed it had in view a very great object, and many of its clauses, if they could have been taken by themselves, would have conferred great educational benefits upon the country. But this Bill was, in the language of Shakespeare, "the baby of a girl," a poor, puny, mean thing, and he doubted whether it would receive Christian baptism at the hands of any clergyman of the Church of England, though, having regard to its fragility, he should be sorry if that ceremony should be postponed indefinitely. [*Laughter.*] No one had supported the Bill who had not admitted that, taken by itself, and if it were to stand alone, it was an unfair and therefore an unjust Bill. Everybody had said that it must be supplemented, and that another Bill must be brought in to remedy the injustice, to destroy the inequality which this Bill created. [*Cheers.*] The Leader of the House in reply to this criticism was civil; he put his hands to his ears and said:—

> "If you would only hold your tongues, and not discuss it over and over again; if you would only be content to say a thing once and never repeat it"

—[*Ministerial cheers and laughter*]—the Government would slip this Measure and proceed to bring in another. But

Mr. Birrell.

what impression would be made on the Treasury Bench if they only made an observation once? [*Laughter.*] It was only by saying a thing over and over again that they made the faintest impression upon the Government, and he had often heard an argument succeed on its fiftieth repetition which failed to excite remark on its first utterance. [*Laughter.*] He thought that any minority was entitled, however small it might be, and however mean might be the intellectual calibre of its members, to protest against having the odium and the shame of an unjust Bill thrown upon them if their exposure of it delays the introduction of another Bill which would set this evil right. Who established and endowed the inequality? Why, the Government. They it was who created the injustice, and then said, "If you only take it quietly we will, at our leisure and in our own good time, introduce another Measure and so make it all right." Now that March 31 had no longer any Parliamentary meaning for them he could not understand why the Government did not do what they admitted to be just in one Bill. The Government should remember that not one of their supporters had defended the Bill as a "financial entity"; they had only granted to it a somewhat dubious support on the ground that it was to be followed by another Bill on an uncertain day. Hon. Gentlemen might trust their leaders, but their leaders could not expect that the Opposition should place the same confidence in them. He was surprised to hear the Solicitor General speak with so much emotion about the remark of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton as to the possible action of the House of Lords when the Board Schools Bill came to be considered. The Solicitor General, surely, was not entitled to say what might happen in another place. They knew that worms turned, and even peers might revolt—[*laughter*]—and there was nothing to prevent the Lords from taking the bit in their teeth and throwing out such a Measure. He was also surprised that the supporters of the Voluntary Schools should be so satisfied as they were with this miserable dole. He thought that the Bill was not only unjust, but inadequate for the purpose which it had in view; and, though they did not know what provisions were being made in the Bill to maintain the subscriptions, they knew that the 17s. 6d. limit, which was some security for their continuance, had been removed. It might, therefore, turn out that what the schools gained in public money would be lost in private subscriptions; and in that case the intolerable strain which existed would still continue to press upon them. He wondered, therefore, that some hon. Members opposite did not raise their voices in favour of such a treatment of Voluntary Schools as would render them independent and able to carry out the great work entrusted to them in a satisfactory manner. So far as the Resolution was concerned, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman was unable to take the advice to alter the words of his Resolution so as to enable this question to be fairly and properly discussed. The Members of the Opposition should not be asked to go into a Debate with their hands tied behind their backs, and possibly with their tongues restricted by the interposition of the Chair. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) moved as an Amendment to the Resolution, in Sub-section (a), line 3, before the word "Voluntary" to insert the word "necessitous." The hon. Member, who spoke amid a babel of noise, said the only ground upon which the Government put forward their proposal was that Voluntary Schools were suffering from an intolerable strain, and that to maintain them in efficiency it was absolutely necessary there should be a grant in aid of them. But there were certain Voluntary Schools in respect of which it could not be said that they were suffering from any such intolerable strain, but were, on the contrary, in no need of aid, and even the Government and their supporters admitted that would be the case. He proposed, therefore, that the Resolution should be confined absolutely to necessitous schools. In the interests of absolute equality between the two systems it ought to be so confined.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said it was perfectly true the Government meant to confine as far as they could the grant of this money to necessitous schools, and when the Bill was in the hands of Members it would be seen that the best machinery had been provided to carry out that purpose. If the word "necessitous" were introduced before "Voluntary Schools" the result would be not merely to confine the aid grant to necessitous schools, but to diminish the total amount of the grant given to Voluntary Schools generally. The Government could not assent to that, and were unable therefore to accept the Amendment.

MR. LOUGH supported the Amendment. He desired, he said, to approach the question from a non-Party spirit. The great defect of the proposal of the Government was this—that instead of trying to deal with the obvious evils of our educational system, they had raised the whole question of national education in a most violent form. His hon. Friend, in moving his Amendment, aimed at touching one of the obvious evils in the educational system. There were extremely necessitous Voluntary Schools all over the country, such, for instance, as the Catholic Schools mentioned by the hon. Member for East Mayo. The acceptance of the Amendment would ensure what would otherwise not be secured, that some substantial relief should reach these schools. Every one of those Catholic Schools which existed in 1870 was still maintained, though the proportion of scholars who could pay any fee whatever was only one-fourth of that in other Denominational Schools.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS: The hon. Member is not addressing himself to the Amendment. There may be reasons why the Amendment should be accepted, but the hon. Gentleman is not dealing with the Amendment at all. He is urging no reason why it should be accepted in place of the original Motion.

MR. LOUGH said his argument was that the chance of relief for these schools was damaged by the proposals of the Government being so large. Last year the assistance to the Voluntary Schools was defeated by the Bill being too comprehensive; and the same danger now presented itself. The First Lord of the Treasury said that the Association of Voluntary Schools which were to be formed would enable the necessitous cases to be dealt with. But he could not see what common bond there would be between the schools forming the Association. Why should the representatives of one school be anxious for a larger grant to another and more necessitous school if their own grant was thereby diminished? There was no guarantee for discrimination.

MR. H. H. ASQUITH (Fife, E.), who was received with loud cheers, said: I regret the impatience with which in some quarters of the House this Amendment has been received. In the view of a great number of us on this side it is a matter of very real and substantial importance. [*Cheers.*] What is the proposal my hon. Friend has made? It is that the grants to be provided by Parliament should be confined to necessitous Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] I listened with respect to the short and somewhat contemptuous observations made by the First Lord of the Treasury—[*cries of* "No, no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]—in reply to that proposal. The question I wish to put—and it deserves a serious answer on the part of the Government—is this, Is this grant you are now asking us to vote out of the public money, to be given to Voluntary Schools which do not come within the category of necessitous schools? I gather from what the First Lord of the Treasury has said that the answer would be in the negative.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes.

MR. ASQUITH: Very well; that forms at least a basis for the Amendment. If the grant is only to be given to necessitous Voluntary Schools—because, admittedly, Voluntary Schools not necessitous, need no aid from the ratepayers—why should we not insert words in the Amendment confining the purpose and scope of the Vote to the class of schools which it is conceded are alone to be benefited? ["Hear, hear!"] I can see a reason why the Government should reject this Amendment. It is this—if we limit the grant about to be made to payments to necessitous Voluntary Schools, then 5s. per head would only have to be paid for the children attending such schools. But the proposal of the Governmen is that, although relief is to be given only to necessitous schools, yet the sum to be distributed is to be calculated at 5s. per child in all Voluntary Schools, necessitous or not. In other words, the 5s. per head is not a true—I do not like to use invidious terms—but a false and fraudulent description. [*Cheers.*] You are to take the whole number of the children educated in all Voluntary Schools of the country, whether these schools are necessitous or not, and then, giving your dole to the necessitous schools alone, you, of course, embrace a far smaller number of children than if the dole applied to all Voluntary Schools, and you are not in that case giving 5s., but 6s., 7s., or even 10s. per child. [*Cheers and counter-cheers.*] I see that that proposition receives assent on the Treasury Bench. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Then why have you not the courage to put it in your Resolution? [*Cheers.*] This is not a grant—and it is not intended to be a grant—of 5s. per head of the children in the schools which are proposed to be relieved by the grant. It is a grant intended to be measured by the whole number of children in Voluntary Schools, necessitous or not, but the benefit of which is to be received alone by those schools which are necessitous. ["Hear, hear!"] If that be so, what we are asked now to appropriate out of the taxpayers' money is not 5s., but some indefinite number of shillings above 5s. for each child in the necessitous Voluntary Schools. [*Opposition cheers and cries of* "Hear, hear!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] The discussion has not been useless, having elucidated that point. I ask one more question. Are you going to give 5s. per head to necessitous School Boards based, not upon the number of children educated in these schools alone, but upon the number of all the children attending the Board Schools? These are questions to which we are entitled to have, not a contemptuous brushing aside, but an explicit, categorical, and unmistakable answer before the Committee divides on this Amendment. [*Cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, who was loudly cheered, said: The right hon. Gentleman has asked me two questions. One of them, it seems to me, he is rather late in the day in asking. [*Laughter.*] The other is rather premature. [*Cheers.*] The question the right hon. Gentleman has asked in regard to Voluntary Schools surely could have been answered by any Gentleman who took the trouble to listen to my statement yesterday, or to the subsequent speeches which were delivered from this Bench. [*Cheers.*] The needs of the Voluntary Schools vary between comparatively wide limits. Some Voluntary Schools need nothing; some need a small subvention; some need 5s., an average grant; some need considerably more. The sum we allocate to be divided into these various amounts among the Voluntary Schools is calculated upon the rate stated in the Resolution before the Committee. If we were to accept the Amendment the result would be to diminish that amount by a very large sum, and we do not mean to diminish it. [*Cheers.*] For that reason we cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. With regard to the second question put by the right hon. Gentleman—namely, whether we were going to adopt the same principle in regard to Board Schools—I would remind him that one of the reasons why we have not introduced into this Bill any question dealing with Board Schools is that, from the very nature of the case, similar provisions cannot be applied. ["Hear, hear!" *and Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] The need may be equal; I do not confess that; I do not dispute it; I do not deal with it one way or the other; but the machinery by which that need is to be met must, from the very necessities of the case, be a different machinery. It is absurd of the right hon. Gentleman to ask me whether the machinery is to be applied in the same way, and when hon. Gentlemen will consent to allow us to have this Bill, and when we are in a position to introduce the Bill dealing with Board Schools, then I shall be able to explain, I am sure to their satisfaction, why it is that a machinery applicable to the one case is not equally applicable to the other. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, we are not here upon a question of machinery. [*Cheers.*] We are here on a question of principle, for you are dealing with public money. [*Cheers.*] We are on a financial Resolution. You have told us now that you are going to ask for a grant of £600,000, not for the purposes which are stated in the Resolution, but for a different purpose. [*Ministerial cries of* "No!" *and Opposition cheers.*] You are going to deal with this money, not for all Voluntary Schools; but I must say the ingenuity with which this Resolution has been framed is such as to make it impossible almost to get at the real intention of the Government upon the matter. If we understand the explanation given by the First Lord of the Treasury, it is that you are to take 5s. a head from schools that do not want it for the purpose of using that money for schools which are alleged to want it. [*Cheers.*] A more tortuous, a more indirect, and, in my opinion, a more improper—[*cries of* "Oh!"]—manner of taking £600,000 I never knew. But the searching question is the second question of my right hon. Friend. When he asks whether this principle is to be applied to the Board Schools of the country, what answer does the right hon. Gentleman give? It is perfectly easy for him to say whether he will follow the same principle, but he evades the question. [*Cheers.*] There must be different machinery, yes, but you may have different machinery for arriving at the same end. Do you mean to arrive at the same end? We have had an endeavour to support this grant to Voluntary Schools by great promise of what is going to be done for the Board Schools. Promises have been held out in order to induce hon. Members on the other side of the House who do not feel very comfortable—[*laughter*]—to support your Bill. The policy of the Government has been to say to them, "Open your mouths and shut your eyes and then you will see what the Board Schools will get." But I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite are ready, not to open their mouths, but to shut their eyes, which is more important in regard to this matter. On this side of the House we are not disposed to shut our eyes in this matter—[*Ministerial laughter*]—and we shall endeavour to open the eyes of other people. [*Cheers.*] I daresay the right hon. Gentleman is about to shut our mouths—[*laughter*]—we know that their favourite system is—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that there is a specific Amendment now before the Committee.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am trying to ask, Sir, whether the principle of this Amendment is about to be applied not only to the Voluntary Schools but to the Board Schools. That is a very practical matter—whether £600,000, or thereabouts, is to be given to the Board Schools as well as to the Voluntary Schools. The greater part of this Debate has turned upon demands made from every side of the House that equal justice should be done to the Board Schools as to the Voluntary Schools, and the Government had held out this expectation as an inducement to us to proceed with these resolutions. Surely, therefore, it is necessary to ascertain how far that inducement which has been held out by the Government is an inducement which ought to lead people to support this Bill. I gather from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government have no intention whatever of dealing with the Board Schools upon the same principle that they have applied to the Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] It was of great importance we should ascertain that, and I think that the Amendment of my hon. Friend has been of the greatest value, because it has detected what are the real intentions of the Government in this matter. We may form our own opinions as to what are the views and intentions of the Government in dealing with the Bill which we are told we are to have, some day or other, on the subject of Board Schools. It is our duty to ascertain before we pass this Bill for the Voluntary Schools what the principles are upon which the other Bill is to be dealt with. I have my own opinion as to what will become of that Bill as soon as the Government have got the Voluntary Schools Bill; but, however, that is a matter which we shall have an opportunity later on of discussing. I should like very much to state my reasons for a very profound scepticism as to the future of that Bill, but that is a matter which does not arise. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yes, but the Amendment has been a very good test, a very good method of forecasting the fortunes of that Bill, and I think the answer the First Lord of the Treasury has given is such as will satisfy us as to what the real intentions of the Government are in dealing with the Board Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*]

Question put, "That the word 'necessitous' be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 112; Noes, 320.

The announcement of the figures was received with Ministerial cheers.

(Division List—No. 12—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir H. (Wol'tn)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch, Sir John G. Smyth
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accr'gton)
Leng, Sir John
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
M'Leod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Oldroyd, Mark
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsf'ld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Lloyd-George and Mr. Lough.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithful
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Butcher, John George
Carew, James Laurence
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh

Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cox, Robert
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Daly, James
Dane, Richard M.
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dillon, John
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledew, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Farrell, James P. (Cavan W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Mancr.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilhooly, James
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kilbride, Denis
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
MacAleese, Daniel
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McCalmont, Maj.-Gn. (Ant'm, N)
McDermott, Patrick
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pender, James
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Rollit, Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)

Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'shire, N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed:—

And, it being after Midnight, and Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman proceeded to interrupt the Business:

Whereupon THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

***THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS** proceeded to put the Question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Mr. Chairman, may I direct your attention to the fact that the Closure cannot be moved according to the 25th Standing Order?

***THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS**: The hon. Member is labouring under a mistake. I am putting the main Question. No Closure has yet been moved.

MR. MACNEILL: Then I object to the main Question—it is after Twelve o'clock.

***THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS**: If the hon. Member objects, then it is open to move the Closure.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I move that the Question be now put.

MR. MACNEILL: I object to that.

The House having been cleared for a Division,

MR. MACNEILL, seated, with his hat on: Will you now, Mr. Lowther, hear me on a Point of Order? I object to this Motion, and I submit, Sir, with great respect, that the Motion for Closure cannot now be put, in accordance with rules after 12 o'clock. ["Oh, oh!" "Order, order!"] May I simply say this to show how this occurs? ["Order, order!"] First, the Motion on which a Division was taken was a subsidiary Motion and not part and parcel of the whole Motion, in reference to the transaction before the Committee, it was merely an Amendment. That being so, if, on that Amendment there had been a Motion for the Closure and if that had been carried and the Amendment disposed of it would have been competent for The First Lord of the Treasury to propose the Motion on the whole Question. But when he made his Motion, the Question had not been proposed. [*Interruptions and cries of* "Order!"] I submit, Sir, that it is utterly impossible in accordance with the rules for any Chairman to invalidate the rules in reference to the Closure, and put the Closure in the midst of the transaction. [*Cries of* "Order!"] And, Sir, if you will forgive me, it is scarcely within the province of a Chairman to suggest the Closure himself. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" "Order!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]

***THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS**: The process is not so elaborate as the hon. Member seems to think it is. If he will look at Rule I. he will observe that the Closure may be moved "on the interruption of business." It was moved on the interruption of business—[*cries of* "No, no!" "Hear, hear!" *and* "Order!"]—the interruption of business took place when the hon. Member objected to my putting the Question. ["Hear, hear!"] That was the interruption of business, and thereupon the Closure was moved according to Rule I. ["Hear, hear!"] The Question is, That the Question be now put.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: — Ayes, 296; Noes, 142.—(Division List—No. 13—appended.)

AYES.

Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithful
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Butcher, John George
Carew, James Laurence
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cox, Robert
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. Edw. S.
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James B.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledow, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man'cr)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, G. J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednsbry)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard. Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'ns'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John.
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
McCalmont, Maj.-Gen. (Ant'mN)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.

Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt.Hn.A.Gr'h'm(Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Kelly, James
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pender, James
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Captain Ernest G.
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Arthur Richard
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel (Herts)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Stock, James Henry
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke d'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees-(Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dixon, George
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P.C.
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir H. (Wol'h'tn)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hogan, James Francis
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nse')
Jones, William (C'rn'rvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'lnd)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McDermott, Patrick
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin B.
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Mundella, Rt. Hn. Anthony John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
O'Malley, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare

Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsf'ld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur

Main Question put accordingly. The Committee divided:—Ayes, 325; Noes, 110.

The announcement of the numbers was received with cheers.

(Division List, No. 14—(appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Aird, John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Bass, Hamar
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithful
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Butcher, John George
Carew, James Laurence
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cox, Robert
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Daly, James
Dane Richard M.
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dillon, John
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Donelan Captain A.
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Engledow, Charles John
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquhar, Sir Horace
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilhooly, James
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)

Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hornby, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kilbride, Denis
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swans'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R.(Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W.(Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter(Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macaleese, Daniel
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McCalmont, Maj.-Gn.(Ant'm, N)
McDermott, Patrick
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W.F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Millbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Grah'm (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pender, James
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berks.)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehy, David
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom William (Derbysh.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart
Stock, James Henry
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Taylor, Francis
Thorburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Verney, Hon. Richard Greville
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Waring, Col. Thomas
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R.E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whiteley, H.(Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh., N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke d'Arcy
Younger, William

Tellers for the Ayes, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)

Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, SirFrancisH.(South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler,RtHnSirHenry(Wol'tn)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch,SirJohn George Smyth
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson,SirWilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley,Rt.Hon.John (Montrose)
Mundella,Rt.Hn.Anthony John
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Oldroyd, Mark
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan,E.)
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walton, John Lawson
Wayman, Thomas
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse,Sir J.T.(Hud'rsf'ld)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Thomas Ellis and Mr. McArthur.

Resolved,—That it is expedient—

(a) to authorise the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an aid grant to Voluntary Schools, not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools;

(b) to repeal as regards day schools so much of section nineteen of The Elementary Education Act, 1876, as imposes a limit on the parliamentary grant to elementary schools in England and Wales; and

(c) to make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools.

Whereupon the Chairman of Ways and Means left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Thursday.

MR. ACLAND: Will it be the first Order?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Yes, the first Order.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (ELECTIONS) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment; Bill Read the Third time, and passed.

House Adjourned at Twenty minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 3rd February 1897.

QUEEN'S SPEECH.

The Comptroller of the Household (Lord Arthur Hill) reported Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth :—

"I have received with great satisfaction the loyal and dutiful expression of your thanks for the Speech with which I have opened the present Session of Parliament."

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

LONDON (CLARE MARKET, STRAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for improving an area situated in the parishes of St. Mary-le-Strand, St. Clement Danes, St. Giles-in-the-Fields, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields, in the county of London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings and Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley; presented, and Read the First time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.—[Bill 113.]

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, under the Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, relating to lands in the parish of St. James, Westminster, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings and Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley; presented, and Read the First time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.—[Bill 114.]

ARBITRATION TREATY (GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES).

Address for "Copy of the Arbitration Treaty between this Country and the United States as recently signed."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.

*Mr. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox), in rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill, said the question of the extension of the franchise to women was in no sense a Party one. He had no desire that it should be dragged into the arena of party controversy, and he did not think the interests of those whose cause he was pleading would be furthered should such an event occur. He asserted, however, that, in his opinion, it would be a lasting credit to any Party in the country which should undertake a Party Measure embodying the principle which was embodied in the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill was intended merely to establish the principle of the extension of the Parliamentary franchise. The Bill, however, contained the irreducible minimum which should be granted by the House in the matter, if the franchise was granted to women at all. It was calculated that the Bill would enfranchise about 500,000 women. He was given to understand that one of the most difficult points in connection with the phraseology of the Bill was whether it did or did not include married women. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, who held strong opinions on the subject, had said that the Bill was obscurely drawn, and contended that it would not include married women. He had no desire to go into the intricacies of legal phraseology, for in the course of discussing the details of the Measure the intention of the House would no doubt be made perfectly clear on the point. He might, say, however, for his own part, that he approved the inclusion of married women, and his reason for doing so was that, by a series of Acts which had been passed in recent years, married women had been given the control of their own earnings—["hear, hear!"]—the control of property that accrued to them as next of kin, and the right to hold property which was secured to them by bequest; and in those circumstances he contended that it followed, as a matter of course, that they should be entitled to vote in connection with the management of that property. ["Hear, hear!"] Another criticism of the Bill made by the right hon. Member was that it would further complicate the existing qualifications for the franchise. He admitted that the franchise was already sufficiently complicated, and he had hoped that the wording of the Bill, if it were passed into law, would rather simplify than further complicate the present state of things. At present the disqualifications for the Parliamentary vote applied to Peers—a restriction which he fully approved—to candidates' agents, to minors, to lunatics, to paupers, to felons, and lastly to women. That was the category in which intelligent women were placed in this country in relation to the Parliamentary franchise. ["Hear, hear!"] Even illiterate persons were allowed to vote, and he found that in the last election no fewer than 73,000 illiterates voted. It was not a credit to our civilisation that, in such circumstances, intelligent women should be debarred from exercising the privilege. [*Cheers.*] Now as to the qualifications of women to vote. They were regarded as capable of holding property, and, in consequence, paid taxes upon it, and it had been recognised for many years as a principle of the constitution that taxation and representation should go together. ["Hear, hear!"] Further, the right had been extended to them to vote in connection with Parish and District Councils, Poor Law Guardians, County Councils, Town Councils, and School Board Elections, and he ventured to say that they had exercised those functions with credit to themselves and advantage to the country. ["Hear, hear!"] Moreover, women had been recently appointed on Royal Commissions, and had been from time to time called as witnesses in Parliamentary inquiries. They had also been granted in recent years educational facilities, through which they had distinguished themselves in many walks of life. Nearly 500 women had already taken the B.A. degree at the London University, nearly 400 had passed tripos examinations at Cambridge, and nearly 300 had passed with honours at Oxford. [*Cheers.*] Notwithstanding all this, they were debarred from assisting to decide by whom the laws under which they lived should be made. ["Hear, hear!"] The criminal statistics of the country showed that women were more law-abiding citizens than men. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] The female population of the country exceeded the male population by about one million, and yet they found that while 8,426 men were convicted at assizes and quarter sessions last year, only 1,267 women were convicted. They were told that women did not understand politics. Did all men understand them? [*Laughter.*] He denied that women were less capable of understanding difficult questions than men, but even if they were that would be no valid reason for excluding them from the franchise. ["Hear, hear!"] Women had special interests of their own which they understood, and which they desired and required to protect. They had special knowledge with regard to special questions, and they had special means of obtaining information with regard to matters which affected their own sex, which were not open to men in any proper sense of the word. ["Hear, hear!"] Therefore, it was only common justice that women should have the means of giving effect to the opinions they formed on those subjects in a constitutional manner—namely, by voting for the election of Members to that House. He wished to say here, with regard to the names which were on the back of the Bill, that he desired to thank hon. Members who had assisted him in bringing in the Measure. There was, he contended, a large mass of public opinion, both in Scotland and in England, in favour of the principle of this Measure, as shown, not only by the petitions sent up to that House by women, but by the resolutions adopted at representative conferences of both the great political parties in the State. He also reminded the House, on this point, of the appeal which was signed last year by no less than 257,000 women from every constituency in the United Kingdom, in favour of the principle of the Bill. Then they had the experience of their Colonies, and he thought this experience was very valuable, because it had given them an object lesson in connection with the working of this principle. A Bill for the enfranchisement of women in connection with Parliamentary Elections was passed in South Australia in 1894, and the working of that Measure had been eminently satisfactory. The first General Election under the Act took place in 1896, and he found that women voted in very large numbers, and that the utmost order and good feeling prevailed. "The gloomy forebodings," said his authority, "of those who had opposed Women's Suffrage have proved entirely groundless." In New Zealand, too, where such a Bill was passed in 1893, the working of the principle had been satisfactory. Sir John Hall, who was formerly the Premier for New Zealand, stated:—

> "Already the fallacy of the arguments against it have been proved. . . . Instead of the rough usage and unpleasant associations which they were warned awaited them, never before has an election been conducted with more decorum and order."

And Sir John quoted a returning officer, who told him that he would rather poll 200 women than 70 men. That was, he thought, admirable testimony to the working of the Measure. He was quite aware that there was a strong opposition in that House to the proposal he was now bringing forward. He knew the rejection of this Measure was to be moved by his hon. Friend the Member for Hereford (Mr. Radcliffe Cooke). He was to be wounded in this matter in the house of his friend, whose manly, but ungallant voice, would be shortly raised in opposition to the Measure. The rejection was to be seconded by the hon. Member for Northampton. He had always understood that the hon. Gentleman's mission in life was to break down privilege and to remedy injustice, yet here they had him the advocate of exclusiveness and the perpetuator of inequality. He had not been able to follow the arguments of the hon. Gentleman in this matter. His main position he understood to be that this was a Measure for unsexing women. He had pondered over that expression, but he had not been able to attach any definite meaning to it. If this principle of the working of which they had not had experience in other connections in this country and in the Colonies, then there might be some point in the criticism. But this principle had been introduced here in municipal matters, and in the Colonies in Parliamentary Elections, and introduced with advantage. That being so he was unable to fathom what could be the basis upon which the hon. Gentleman brought forward an assertion of this kind. He believed himself that the hon. Gentleman had in his mind a certain political institution in this country which, if he might say so, was his pet aversion—that great organisation, the Primrose League—and that he believed, if women were enfranchised in this country, their votes would be cast exclusively in support of Tory candidates. If that was so, and the hon. Member did not dissent from it—

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I do dissent.

*MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: Then the hon. Gentleman thinks that the votes would be cast in favour of the candidates of his own way of thinking.

MR. LABOUCHERE: No.

*MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: Then the hon. Gentleman has no opinion on the matter at all.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Yes I have.

*MR. FAITHFULL BEGG said that, however that might be, the argument was largely used in the country that the effect of the enfranchisement of women would be to bring a great reinforcement into the ranks of either one or the other party in the State. In his opinion that was a most unworthy argument. That was the very last consideration which should be advanced in connection with a matter of this kind. He was not aware that when they had had to consider the granting of an extension of the franchise they had ever considered the particular direction in which the votes would be cast. If they had done so he hoped they would never do so in the future. Such an argument and such a consideration as that was pure and unadulterated Krugerism. Mr. Kruger professed to be willing to redress the grievances of the Uitlanders and to extend the franchise, but he wished to be satisfied beforehand that the votes would be cast in favour of the particular policy of which he approved. That was not an aspect of the question which should be regarded for a moment by anyone considering such an important matter as this. His general position was that there was no valid argument against the principle of this Bill. Arguments there might be, born of prejudice or of sentiment, but there was no logical, valid, or just argument against the position which he took up in this matter. He had had the greatest possible pleasure in bringing this matter before the House, and he appealed to all hon. Members to cast themselves loose from any remnant of prejudice of sentiment, or other unworthy consideration; to recognise the inherent justice of the claim which was now being once more made in constitutional form in that

House, to give effect to the logical consequences and outcome of those successive legislative experiments which had been made, and which, he contended, had been made successfully, in this country in the past, and by doing so once more to broaden, to strengthen, and to improve the basis upon which our representative institutions stood. He believed that, thus broadened, thus strengthened, and thus improved, those institutions would continue to be the guarantee and security for the prosperity of the country in the future as they had been the guarantee and security for that prosperity in the past. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.), in seconding the Motion, complimented the hon. Mover on the ability of his speech. He did not think there were any persons in the House who would be prepared to dispute the view that the Women's Suffrage question had, in the last few years, made the most substantial progress in the opinions of the people of this country. He did not deny that they might still be confronted to some extent with the ridicule which, in times past, was the usual way with which this question was approached by those opposed to it; but on the whole, the question had passed from the stage of ridicule to the intelligible ground of practical politics. Upon that common platform, as to the political expediency or inexpediency of the Measure, they were now in a position to debate the question. There still remained one or two grotesque arguments against the Measure of Women's Enfranchisement, but before dealing with them he should like to say one word with regard to the legal aspect of this Measure. He had not the smallest doubt that the Bill would be exposed to the critical acumen of many learned friends, and he might say at once that on the compass of the Measure there would be a divergent opinion from two points of view; one that it was not large enough in its scope, and the other that it was too small or narrow in its scope. Those who were responsible for the drafting of the Bill thought it wise to choose the line of least resistance. They knew perfectly well, if, for instance, they were to enfranchise women lodgers, that there would be a very strong and very formidable volume of opposition from certain sections of the House, and although he, for one, should very much like to see women lodgers included within the scope of the Bill, yet those who were responsible for its drafting came to the conclusion that it would be well to allow that question to be laid before the House at large, so that when the Bill came before the Committee, amendments in that direction, if that was the general sense, might be included. Again, there was the debatable question as to whether women who were married should be included in the Bill. There, again, no attempt had been made to deal with that proposition. The point of view the promoters of the Bill took was this. There were a large number of Members who say, "If you include married women we shall oppose the Bill." On the other hand, there were Members who said, "If you do not include married women we shall oppose it, because we think married women, of all people in the world belonging to their sex, at any rate, are entitled to the highest consideration, and it is discreditable to make marriage a loss of political status." He ventured to suggest that the Bill probably did include married women. It was not quite clear, and perhaps some hon. Gentlemen would say that it ought to be made quite clear. He agreed there was force in that observation, but, in view of a very recent decision in the High Courts of Justice, there was some doubt raised as to whether or no certain operative words in the Acts of Parliament creating local government franchises did or did not include married women. However that might be, the basis upon which all hon. Members would vote, either for or against the Measure, was this—that its promoters were enunciating the principle of Women's Suffrage, and they should leave the questions of the scope and the extent of the qualifications to be dealt with by the House in the proper place for so dealing with them—namely, in the Committee of this House, and upon the Report stage of the Bill. He had said there were grotesque arguments still surviving against the enfranchisement of women. One such argument was that because women were not likely and could not be called upon to use arms in defence of their country, they ought not to be entrusted with the franchise. He remembered the last time upon which this question was debated in the House, his right hon. Friend the Member for East Fife—whose absence, in common with that of the occupants of both Front Benches he deplored, because he knew they should probably hear, when the Debate had reached its final stages, speeches from his right hon. Friend and other right hon. Gentlemen directed against this Bill, without their having condescended to listen to the arguments which have been advanced in support of it—he remembered his right hon. Friend adopted that argument, and he ventured to say that his expression of grotesque as applied to it was not unwarranted. He should like to ask how many people who were responsible for involving this country in war were ever likely to bear arms in its defence? They, in the House of Commons, and also in the other House, were the persons who in a large measure were responsible for directing that movement of popular opinion which might produce war. And yet, of all the hon. Members in that Assembly, except one or two hon. and gallant Gentlemen, there was hardly a solitary man who would bear arms. He had no doubt that his hon. Friend the Member for Hereford and the hon. Member for Northampton, who would not even, either of them, take the position of a drummer boy in the Army, would both rise up in their places and say it was an anomaly, unjust and unreasonable, to entrust the franchise to people not capable of bearing arms in the defence of their country. What he claimed for women was, that although they did not actually, and might not, perhaps, be able (although that might be an arguable question) to bear arms, at the same time they bore the responsibilities and disadvantages of war. They suffered more acutely in their own persons and the persons of their children from being deprived of their husbands or their sons or brothers by the operations of war. They suffered from the burden of taxes and the general disarrangement of their social condition by war, to as large an extent at least, and probably even to a larger extent, than those who took an active part in carrying on war. He would not dwell further upon that argument. He dismissed it as one which was grotesque, and which could not be reasonably sustained before any enlightened assembly. Among arguments he had culled from speeches made against this extension was one which at first sight appeared formidable, that women were indifferent to the franchise, and did not care to exercise it, that there had never been any demonstration on their part of their anxiety for the franchise. Had the working classes of this country ever demonstrated with any remarkable ardour for the exercise of the franchise? [" Yes ! "] For centuries the working classes of this country acquiesced in their exclusion from the franchise. True, there were intermittent agitations excited by the enthusiasm of political leaders, but for the most part it was a sorrowful fact, and it was a matter of common reproach at the time of the extension of the franchise in 1867, and again in 1885, that the working classes were to a very large and lamentable extent oblivious to the responsibilities that devolved upon them in relation to the franchise; and he ventured to say, speaking with the strongest democratic instincts, that it was more due to the exigencies of political parties than to any persistent and solid agitation for it that the working classes received the franchise. Women had not the same opportunities of making their views and opinions known as were in the nature of things conceded to men. Women had not control of the Press, women had not control of the platform, it was contrary to the nature of women to take part in those formidable demonstrations which from time to time marked the activity of political enthusiasm among men. But, although they had not these facilities, there were not wanting indications of a strong opinion in favour of this movement among the women of the day. Many women of distinction had given adhesion to the movement, and so far as he could gather the feeling among women was in that direction. So far as vehicles for the expression of opinion offered, petitions and so forth, the evidence was abundant that women did desire the possession of the franchise. Another argument which had a formidable appearance, and which no doubt would be heard *ad nauseam*, was that women would come under influences direct or indirect which would control their votes. Now which were these improper agencies?

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The Church.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said he anticipated that. But which Church? Was it the English Church or the Catholic Church? [HON. MEMBERS: "All!"] Well, were the precepts and examples of the churches good or bad? Were Ministers belonging to the various religious denominations fit and proper persons to exercise their influence over women or not? In the first place there would be as great variety of opinion brought to bear upon women from the various sections of the Church as would be exercised in other directions, and Nonconformist Ministers using their influence in one way, Clergymen of the Established Church perhaps in another. Therefore, so far as the Church was concerned there would be check and counter-check applied, and the effect even if such influence did operate would be impartial. Another influence was possibly that of the male relatives of women. Well, that was not an unenlightened or baneful influence, and again there would be check and counter-check, and the number of the electorate would swell without injury to either political party. But these were mainly speculative opinions. There was no ground for supposing that women would be more likely to be susceptible to undue influence than men. The very same argument was advanced against the enfranchisement of certain sections of the working classes. It was said they would be subject to all kinds of indirect influence and would be driven to the polls like sheep. But none of these anticipations had been realised. The working classes had exercised the franchise with a full sense of their responsibility, and it was unworthy the serious consideration of this great cause to argue on the assertion that women would not honestly, conscientiously and intelligently exercise the franchise if it were conferred upon them. Another argument he would briefly touch upon would probably be the degradation of women. One hon. Member had even gone so far as to say women would be unsexed by being dragged into the turmoil and dust of party strife. Could such an argument as that be in the mouth of hon. Gentlemen who were only too glad to avail themselves of the services of women during election time? Had the hon. Member for Hereford (Mr. Cooke) never found a haughty Primrose Dame ready to go through the slums of Hereford to gain a vote for him? Did not his hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) sometimes lean for support on a Liberal Woman of Northampton? [*Laughter.*]

MR. LABOUCHERE: No. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said his hon. Friend repudiated the suggestion, but he had reason to believe that among the ladies of Northampton his hon. Friend had many hearty and sympathising supporters. Not only did Members avail themselves of women's help in political organisations but they dragged their wives through all the dreary, weary election time, from platform to platform, to listen to insipid oratory. [*Laughter.*] He knew one most charming lady, wife of a Member on that side of the House, who conducted to a successful issue an election campaign during her husband's absence abroad. It was idle to talk about this degradation, all the evidence we had showed that it tended to elevate the tone of elections when women took part in them. If there ever was any force in the argument it had disappeared, and women now took part in District Council, Parish Council, County Council, Boards of Guardians, Municipal and School Board elections, and upon some of these bodies women sat and took part in administration of local affairs. In view of these admissions made by the Legislature, the justice of the claim to vote for a Member of Parliament could not be invalidated by any such ridiculous contention. Another, and the last argument to which he would allude, was that there was no necessity to give women votes because they were already represented by the male members of their families. It was a specious, plausible argument, but absolutely unsound. A similar argument was advanced against the enfranchisement of agricultural labourers; it was said that the farmers and owners represented the interests of agriculture, and solemn speeches declared the interests of owners, farmers, and labourers to be identical. He had only to state one fact to bring conviction to the minds of Members that the interests of women are not adequately represented. There are over two millions of women employed in our factories. He wished to say nothing in disparagement of Trades Unions, they might be right or wrong in the view they took, but they had been constant in their efforts to interfere with the rights of labour by women. Trades Unions had continually been hampering the attempts of women to have the free right to sell their labour in whatever direction they pleased. The two million women who worked in factories should have the right to bring direct influence to bear through legitimate channels upon Parliament, through Members chosen by themselves to decide this question. Was it not of urgent and vital importance in the interests of sanitation that factory women should be able to bring direct pressure to bear on Parliament to better the conditions of their lives? Was the question of education and employment of children of no moment to women? Whatever might be the effect of recent legislation in New Zealand or New South Wales, undoubtedly a great factor and lever for dealing with the temperance question would be the enfranchisement of women, and it was a well-known fact that what animated the women of New Zealand to secure the franchise was the conviction that, not through the men, but through the agency of women, could any reform in that direction be secured. If women possessed the franchise, an honest effort would be made, which, he believed, would be crowned with success, if not to remove, at least to mitigate, the horrible evils which resulted from our unhappy social system. The number of women who would be enfranchised by the Bill was comparatively small. The supporters of the Bill believed that by admitting women to the franchise Parliament would do much to upraise, morally, intellectually, and politically the condition of women, and to make woman what to a large extent she was not at present—a more fitting companion, comrade, and partner to man. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford), in moving the rejection of the Bill, congratulated the supporters of the Bill on the able advocacy of the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading. First of all, however, he desired to remove the reproach cast on the capital city of his native county, which he had the honour to represent. It was said that he sent 40—[" No," *and laughter*]—Primrose Dames to wander about the slums of Hereford to get votes for him.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: Haughty, not forty. [*Laughter.*]

*MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: He sent no Primrose Dames to wander through the slums of Hereford, because there were no slums in that highly-respectable city. [" Hear, hear!"] His hon. and learned Friend who had just spoken had said he was a comparatively new convert to this movement. He did not tell all about himself. When he first entered the House he was in favour of Women's Suffrage. A few years after he changed his mind, and became a convinced opponent of it, and now he said he had been re-converted to his original views.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I never was in favour of it when I first entered the House. It was in my childhood. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

*MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: Then the sooner the hon. Member attains to his second childhood the better. [" Hear, hear!"] The Conference of the National Union of Conservative Associations, which at Oxford in 1887 passed a resolution in favour of Women's Suffrage, passed also a resolution in favour of Protection, but nothing came of either. [*Laughter.*] It was suggested that we should follow the example of New Zealand and South Australia. Generally speaking, the children followed the example of the parent, not the parents the example of the children, and the only answer to this he would give in two words—*fiat experimentum.* When other civilised nations began to grant the franchise to women, it might be time for the most civilised nation in the world to see whether it would not be well to follow their example. Women had now the vote in Wyoming, and formerly in Washington, but when the latter was formed into a State the Women's Suffrage Law was repealed. If in America, where there were about 44 States, only the smallest and most remote had adopted the system, that was considerable reason why we should hesitate and watch what they were going to do in the matter. Before proceeding further he would like, with the permission of the House, to make a few respectful comments on the attitude assumed by Members of Parliament on this question. He had had an opportunity on this and previous occasions of conversing with Members of the House, and he had found their attitude to be one of considerable doubt. In fact, many would have been only too pleased if the Debate of yesterday had lasted over to-day. He did not wonder at their state of mind, for sometimes they called themselves Wobblers, and sometimes Waverers, but he would not weary the House with particular instances, though he would mention in passing one hon. Member who, when he asked him if he was going to vote for the Bill, said, "Yes, to please my mother." [*Laughter.*] There were also a large number who said they would vote for the Bill, but hoped it would not pass, or would vote for it because they had a number of women bothering them to do so. He had also a very good instance which would give rise to no little surprise if he ventured to mention the name of the hon. Member. [An HON. MEMBER: "Name."] No, he was not going to give him away. [*Laughter.*] He was not going to expose him to the tender mercies of the women he had deluded and deceived. [*Laughter.*] What did that hon. Member tell him only last Thursday as ever was, when he met him in the Lobby? The hon. Member was in the House now. [*Laughter.*] He said to him, "Are you an advocate of Women's Suffrage?" He replied, "Oh, yes, yes!" Then he looked very solemn, cast his eyes up to the ceiling, smote thrice upon his breast, assumed the attitude of the penitent publican, and said, "But in our inmost soul"—and then he smote his breast again so as to leave no doubt where he kept his soul—[*laughter*]—"in our inmost soul we dislike this Measure. We are the victims of pertinacity. We are the victims of the importunate widow." [*Laughter.*] Then he went on to say, "More than this, I will give you what I think a good argument to use against it"—and he was going to use it. He would not say on which side of the House that hon. Member sat, but he could see him. [*Loud laughter.*] The argument was this. It was said that several of the Leaders of the two Parties in the House were in favour of Women's Suffrage; yet was it to be supposed that if the Leaders of the two great Parties had been in favour of Women's Suffrage, and believed there was a feeling in the country in favour of it commensurate with the talk about it, they would allow the matter to remain in the hands of private Members? Would it not long before this have formed a plank in some Government platform? Was it to be supposed that the Leader of the House, who was believed to be in favour of this movement, would have taken that Wednesday last year which would have afforded so favourable an opportunity for the discussion of this Bill? Would the right hon. Gentleman not have spared that one day if he had had any real belief that either his followers were in favour of this Bill, or that there was any considerable body of opinion in the country in its favour? He thought it was very dishonourable on the part of hon. Members to deceive the ladies by telling them they would vote for this Measure though they did not want it. Now he would say a few words as to the progress made with the movement. The two principal Women's Suffrage Societies into which the original society was divided had been in existence for 30 years, and he had asked the Secretary of the so-called Parliamentary Committee, Miss Cozens—they had all seen her outside in the Lobby—what she thought was the cause why the original society was divided, and her reply was that there was a split on the married women. He knew there was a difference of opinion. The married women said they would not be ruled over by spinsters and widows, and they had their way, but the real cause of the division was, that about eight or nine years ago the fortunes of Woman Suffrage were at an extremely low ebb. Many branches had to be given up because no women attended them. The main support came from the Radical side, and at last it occurred to a brilliant but unscrupulous genius that it would be a good stroke of policy if they could persuade Liberal associations—purely political associations—to become affiliated with the central body of the Women's Suffrage Society. That scheme was actually carried out, but at the expense of unity. Why? Because some who remained in the old society said it was not honourable nor honest. He found in the report of the Central National Society that out of 67 societies who were claimed as affiliated with the Suffrage Society only 11 were Suffrage Societies, and 56 were Liberal Associations of the ordinary stamp. The Parliamentary Committee appeared to have originated at Congleton, in Cheshire. It did not flourish there, and was brought up to London, and it consisted for some time, so he understood, of Miss Cozens, the secretary, and her mother. There was no office, no officials, and no money. Now, however, there was an imposing list of officials, headed by their old friend Sir R. Temple, whom he regretted not to see in the House. The financial condition of the society—which he thought was, after all, the great test of the vitality of a society—was this: The annual subscriptions amounted to £15 1s. 6d., but the expenditure came to £26 1s. 9d. However, there was a balance of £12 in hand. He had asked Miss Cozens how that was made up, and she said it was no use trying to get subscriptions, so they had a ball at Kensington Town Hall, by which they raised £40. He would now turn to the part of the country which was the most favourably situated in connection with this movement—that was the North of England, whose centre was Manchester. The Manchester society was the earliest founded of any. It was founded in the year 1867—30 years ago. It was greatly assisted by the fact that Miss Becker, the mainstay of the movement up there, lived in the place. It was also the constituency represented by the Leader of the House, who was supposed to be in favour of the movement. He would point out the condition of that Society. Manchester was a city of 530,000 inhabitants. It was difficult to be closely accurate in giving the number of members of the society, because he observed in all these cases where application was made to secretaries for official reports giving the number of members of their societies, there was much vagueness in their replies. However, he had endeavoured to calculate the number of members of the Manchester Society, and he found that in a population of 530,000 there were about 160 members all told, both men and women, many of them not residing in Manchester at all. So, roughly speaking, they were in a proportion of about 1 to 3,500 of the population, and that in a part of England where the Society had been longest in existence. In these circumstances could it be said that public feeling had been greatly roused in Manchester, or that there was a great desire for the grant of these privileges to the sex in that part of the world? Then as to the question of finance. In what condition were the finances of the Suffrage Society in Manchester? Why, the Society was in debt to the extent of £70 at this moment, and yet in Manchester there were plenty of wealthy, intelligent women who were supposed, according to the supporters of this Bill, to be pining for the franchise. How was it that they did not come forward to free the Society from the burden of this debt, planking down their thousands, and putting the Society in a position of permanent financial security? But there was not a single supporter of the movement in Manchester who would move a finger to relieve the Society from this burden of debt. But if the parent Society in Manchester languished, what about the branches, of which there was one at Rochdale and another at Gorton? A friend of his wrote to those places asking what the position of those Societies was, and what was the feeling in the neighbourhood. With reference to Rochdale, the report of the Secretary said:—"Thought has been stirred in the town on the question, and we have enrolled fresh members." Now this stirring of thought had resulted in the expenditure of £4 15s. 4d., and in receipts of £4 9s. 3d. There was accordingly a deficit of 6s. 1d., which the General Committee had to defray, so that the Rochdale branch of the Society was now without a shilling to bless itself with. With reference to Gorton, the report of the Secretary said:—"The cause of Women's Suffrage is slowly gaining ground, and the opinions of this branch have been instrumental in some degree in forming a true opinion upon the matter here." But they had not gone very far in the formation of a true opinion, for the total income of the year amounted to the magnificent sum of 12s. The management, however, cut their coat according to their cloth, and spent in the year exactly the same sum. They were, however, happier than the Society in Manchester, in that they were not in debt. To sum up, Manchester was in debt to the sum of £70, Rochdale had not a single shilling to bless itself with, and Gorton was in the same position. Yet he should have supposed that, if these opinions were really spreading, there would have been people in both those places who would be willing to give some practical expression of their views, and to put these Societies on a sound foundation, thus enabling them to rouse public opinion in the neighbourhood. Now he would go to another place in the North of England. In Leeds the population was 402,500, and the number of members there was about 113, bearing the same proportion to the population as the members of the Society did to the population in Manchester, namely, 1 to every 3,500 inhabitants. The finances of the Society in Leeds, the report said, were in a satisfactory condition, and he was bound to say they were, as compared with the finances elsewhere. The income of this Society last year was £7 6s. 4d., and there was a cash balance of £2 11s. 5½d. That appeared to be the Society in the whole of this part of the country which was in the most flourishing condition. But he was not surprised that the Secretary who supplied this information should say, "Here also women are very indifferent;" so they were not only indifferent in Leeds but in many other places also. In London there were the two parent Societies, and he lumped their members together, although it was very difficult to say whether they were residents in London or not. It was clear that many were not, and had no real connection with London; but he would give the Society the benefit of those members, and lumping together the total number of members of the two parent Societies in London, he found that the proportion of members of this Society to the population was 1 to half a million. So this movement had made so much progress that one person in half a million would subscribe to the funds of the institution which was intended to promote the cause. If it were said, as it would be probably, that this view was the view of an opponent, and possibly a biassed individual, he would refer to what the most active supporters of the movement said about it themselves. Did they say that much substantial progress had been made? He had with him a report of the National Conference of the Delegates of the Women's Suffrage Societies in Great Britain and Ireland, held in Birmingham in October last. He presumed they got together there the most representative body they could. Affixed to this report was a map of England, which he held in his hand. The dark places on the map were the names of places where meetings had been held during the last few years—drawing-room meetings, and so on. Here was Manchester, where so much good work was said to have been done, and Leeds, and Gorton, and Rochdale. These were marked very black. All the rest of England was almost wholly blank. The supporters of the movement did not seem to be altogether satisfied with the condition of the country. They did not think that it had been quite sufficiently well worked, and they had drawn up a smaller map, which he held in his hand. On this, as would be seen, they proposed to divide England into districts, to be organised by paid organisers. Well, they had £2 11s. 5d. in Leeds, which would go some way to pay them, he supposed. Where the rest of the money was to come from he did not know. He would say as regarded that map that it was as blank as a map of Africa used to be. So here was a great constitutional agitation for conferring new rights upon people who had never had them before, and who inhabited places where they had never even heard of those rights, never had been approached on the subject, and knew nothing about it. The first reference he should make to the speeches delivered at this Women's Suffrage Meeting, in October last, was to the speech of the principal speaker—a Mrs. Thomas Taylor. She made an earnest speech, a speech which was referred to as being the most interesting and practical speech those present had ever heard. She wanted to know how it was that Women's Suffrage had not made the progress that some of its friends wished it had made, and she said:—

Mr. Radcliffe Cooke.

> "We must seek for the real reasons why we have not yet got the Suffrage, and amongst all those that are hurled at our heads by friends or foes, only one to my mind really hits the nail on the head. It is this: 'you have not got the great mass of women with you. The majority of women do not really care about the Suffrage.' That I think we must all admit is true. There are hundreds and thousands of women who do

care for the Suffrage, but there are millions—I speak advisedly—"

and this was a woman who knew all about it and who had been all over the country propagating the faith—

"millions who not only do not care, but who have many of them never heard of it, and who certainly do not realise what it means."

So that House was actually asked to grant the suffrage to millions of women who knew nothing about it, and did not care for it. Then Mrs. Taylor referred to the map he had shown to the House, and said:—

"Look at Cumberland, at Lincoln, at Devonshire. What do all those blank spaces mean but that there are no Suffrage women there, or only a few isolated individuals. If all the marked places may be taken as centres of life, all those blank spaces are realms of darkness, heathen lands so far as Women's Suffrage is concerned. What chance, I ask you, have we of getting Women's Suffrage"—

this was what the Women's Society, the active supporters of the movement said, who knew all about it—

"what chance have we of getting Women's Suffrage or of having numbers of women at elections pressing M.P.'s for the Suffrage, when we have all that much country unconcerned about it—unconverted."

So what they were asked to do was to give to that large country, that unconverted land, the Suffrage, and there were gentlemen who would actually do so, and who were ready to take a leap into the realm of darkness, to use this good lady's phrase. Mrs. Taylor was followed by a lady of distinction, the Hon. Mrs. Arthur Lyttleton, who, after addressing Mrs. Taylor, and thoroughly agreeing with the truth and accuracy of the observations that had fallen from her, spoke as follows:—

"Let all those anxious for the amelioration of the position of women, in whatever department of life it may be, put aside their differences, and agree to some such scheme as that laid before us to-day, which will, as we hope, ensure that every man and woman in England will be made acquainted with what we seek. This will enable us to have a definite plan to put before our supporters, many of whom have contributed to the Suffrage movement during the last twenty or thirty years, and who are growing tired of giving, for as they say, we seem no nearer to our goal."

"No nearer our goal!" And his hon. Friend pretended to think they had reached it when he knew perfectly well they had not even made a start for the race that was set before them. He would give the House one more quotation, and then he had done. Mrs. Lyttleton was followed by Mrs. Scatchherd, who also spoke with such becoming frankness that he would venture to read one passage, the last one he should read from the Report:—

"The question is," asks this good lady, "what are we to do now? It is useless merely to say pleasant things; we must speak the truth and face the situation. Our experience then is that the day of the average public meeting which we have been holding for the last fifteen years is practically over and that drawing-room meetings are also becoming things of the past. What did you get at these meetings? A resolution passed in favour of the Suffrage. What next? Well, nothing—nothing practical. You get an expression of approval, intellectual approval; but that is vastly different from conviction."

They had it then that the day of the average public meeting held in Manchester, Leeds, or at the Oxford Conference, which the ladies had been holding for the last 15 years, was practically over, and that the drawing-room meeting was also becoming a thing of the past. The drawing-room meeting of his day was sometimes of a singular complexion. The ladies used to think then that it was desirable to try and get up some kind of discussion on the subject of Women's Suffrage, for although they were all women they were of one mind in one house, and they could not get them to advocate the question with any show of argument on behalf of the unfortunate men. What they did, therefore, was this. In order to make the meeting more agreeable they used to borrow a couple of barristers and invite them to come and say what they had to say on behalf of their own degraded sex. He knew this, because he had been "borrowed," and he had made remarks that were not received in the cordial spirit in which they had been offered. [*Laughter.*] He knew also the exaggerated mode in which the resolutions were passed, and how the meetings were put in the Press. He met the same speakers over and over again; the same organisers, such as Miss Becker, Miss Tod, Miss Orme. If the front drawing-room was nearly full then the meeting was described as "a fine display of public feeling;" if the front drawing-room was quite full, and the folding doors were thrown open, and the little back drawing-room nearly full, too, then the assembly assumed the character of a national demonstration. [*Laughter.*] Those meetings were industriously reported throughout the country, until at last people began to say that there must be something in the movement, whereas, if they were behind the scenes they would know perfectly well that it was a "put-up job," that it was a manufactured article, and that the people who promoted it were "a stage army." [*Laughter.*] It was the same now. The Report of the National Society for Women's Suffrage, 1894, contained a list of meetings which were held —78 in all, of which 25 were drawing-room meetings. There was a drawing-room meeting by invitation of Miss Tickell; a drawing-room meeting by invitation of Mrs. Algernon Joy, with Mr. Joy in the chair; and of these meetings Mrs. Fawcett, the hon. secretary, addressed 34, Miss Blackburn 10, and Miss Mordan 8, and all these women made one attempt after another at different meetings to endeavour to excite enthusiasm among their friends in favour of this movement. In the North, the manifestations were the same. Out of 34 meetings held in the year ending October last, the "stage army" was again to the front. Mrs. Philip addressed 15 meetings, Miss Hodgson and Miss Edwards each 7.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) rose to order, and asked whether the hon. Member was speaking to the question before the House?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is within the limits of order, though perhaps somewhat discursive.

*Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE said he was employing all these quotations as an illustration to show how the movement in favour of Women's Suffrage was got up, and he was, therefore, endeavouring to support the arguments with which he began—that there was no sufficient demand for the Franchise among women; and that the demand was supported by meetings organised and got up in this way was no true demand, and in order to show what the nature of the meetings was. He said now, as he said before, that it was a "stage army" that went about the country; whereas now they had Mrs. Fawcett and other ladies going from place to place about the country endeavouring to promote the movement, so then they had Miss Becker, Miss Tod, and Miss Orme following the same procedure.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Is it right, Sir, that all the names of those ladies should be dragged into this controversy? [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a question of order.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON: It is very bad taste then.

*Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE said it was a matter of purely good or bad taste, if the hon. Gentleman liked, when he mentioned that a lady attended 50 meetings, that the women had a public meeting here and a public meeting there, and that certain ladies attended so many public meetings, and he mentioned them by name. Was it wrong to say that? Was it a question of bad taste? How could he show how a movement of this kind was organised unless he mentioned the organisers by name? Was it bad taste to mention that? No; he thought it was good argument. He considered that Mrs. Russell-Cooke formed a very good judgment of the opinion of the members of the House when she said:—

> "I am under the impression, though I would not say it to everyone, that, although we sometimes attack Members of Parliament, there is on the whole a larger proportion of opinion in favour of Women's Suffrage in the House of Commons than there is in the country; and that is why Members are so slack about putting their professions into actual practice."

He had shown the plan of campaign and the war chest at Leeds; and he said that the position of the movement in this country did not as yet warrant the introduction of any Bill of any sort or kind granting the Suffrage to Women. [*Cheers.*] If he were conducting a case in Court he should stop here. He should submit that there was no case; or if it went to the jury, he should rest content with the facts he had proved and should decline to address them. But he thought it due to his hon. Friend who brought forward the question, and in consideration of the strong views held by some hon. Members on the subject, to venture, with the permission of the House, on a rather dry disquisition while making the endeavour to prove the second head of the argument with which he started, namely, that it was unjust to grant Women's Suffrage. Might he be allowed to preface the observations on this head with some remarks on the nature of the Franchise? This Measure was said to be intended to give the vote to duly-qualified women, that was to say women who had some sort of property qualification. Stress was laid by his hon. Friend on the intelligence of women, and this was a point which was made much of, and would be again, by subsequent speakers. He granted that intelligence as fully as ever the hon. Member could wish, but intelligence had nothing to do with this question, except that the voter must not be deficient in ordinary human capacity, must not be a lunatic or an idiot. But intelligence, whether good, bad, or indifferent, was not a qualification, for the simple reason that they could not test it where millions were concerned. Mr. Mill, an early and consistent advocate of what he called the emancipation of woman, desired such a test, but he abandoned all notion of it on the ground of its impracticability. Examinations formed some test, and they had the University vote so tested, but this, too, as a test, was becoming discredited. Therefore, the highly intelligent widow with a lowly, intelligent coachman, had no cause *quâ* intelligence to complain because he had a vote and she had not. But it was said that the highly-intelligent widow had a large property and the non-intelligent coachman none; but on the score of intelligence she had no claim for special consideration, because to put her on an equality with the coachman she ought to have a proportion of votes equivalent to the extent in which her intelligence exceeded his. [*Laughter.*] It would be said also that there were many women possessed of a large amount of property, but neither was property in itself a qualification. It was not the house, the sticks and the stones, that voted; this property was only an indication of the position in the community held by the owner of it; it was an outward and visible sign that he had some interest in the country. But property was not the only indication, and as an indication it was rapidly falling into disrepute. Indeed, they proposed to take away from the owners of property the very property qualification and votes which they now enjoyed. Services were a qualification, a lodging was a qualification, and the like. Now, what sort of position did these indications denote? He thought it was this, that the subject of them was not a mere casual, not a mere waif and stray.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): Mr. Speaker, I beg to call your attention to the fact that there are not 40 Members present.

After the usual interval, a quorum was found to be present.

*MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE said all the qualifications he had mentioned were indications of some stability on the part of the voter, or led to some presumption that he had some interest in some place for some time, and therefore was likely to be engaged in the duties of a citizen. Underlying all these qualifications or indications was the suggestion or presumption of work. Position in the community, with the ever underlying accompaniment of work, was in his judgment the true qualification for the exercise of the franchise. Now women, like men, had position in the community—married women the best and most stable of all positions, and they had their sphere of work; but again, with insignificant exceptions, their sphere of work was different from that of men. It had no direct relation as men's work had to the principal functions of this House, and the reasons for the existence of this House. In a word, the question resolved itself into a question of sex. Look around. This building, in which this room, from its associations and use, was the most noteworthy feature, was raised by the labours of men. He went forth into this great city and found that throughout the length and breadth thereof not one brick nor one stone was laid on but by the hands of men. All those great arteries of communication which constitute what Lord Bacon called the essentials to the greatness and wealth of a nation—easy conveyance of men and goods from place to place—had been made and were maintained by men who, in like manner, conduct the traffic over them, and devise the complex system whereby such traffic was regulated. All our manufactories in which the produce of the earth was converted into wealth for the use of mankind, and all the machinery therein, had been erected and were kept going by men. Go to our great ports and see how vast was the foreign trade of this country, and how all the laborious part of it was carried on by men. Who went down to the sea in ships and saw the wonders and braved the dangers of the deep? Men. Who navigated over trackless oceans? That vast marine which brought wealth and comfort to every home. Who founded the great Empire of which this kingdom was the heart? Men. That "morning drum beat which," as had been well said, "following the sun and keeping company with the hours, encircles the earth with one unbroken strain of the martial airs of England," wakened whom? Men. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Who nursed you?"] Who secured to us the fruits of toil and safeguarded us in our sea-girt isle? Men. What was the outcome of all these unceasing and ever increasing labours of men? [Mr. ALLAN (Gateshead): "Children."] Our existence here to-day as a social and civilised community. And what did a social and civilised community involve and require? Laws, whereby its complex system might be regulated. And laws made by whom? By Parliament. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to address himself more directly to the question. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: Oh! I must have egregiously failed to make myself clear. [*Cheers and laughter.*] What he was arguing was this, that as all the material framework of society, all that enabled this country to be a social and civilised community, was made and executed by men, so they ought to govern it. That this point was a good one was plain from the efforts which the supporters of the Women's Suffrage movement had made from time to time to show that women could do the work of men. In the *Women's Suffrage Journal*, conducted by Miss Becker, a number of instances were cited of cases in which women performed the work of men. From that he gathered that there were a few women who superintend lighthouses in America, a few women who navigate small coasting vessels, and that there is at least one woman pilot somewhere on the Welsh coast. She even went to the extent of instancing women criminals where the crime committed was, if he might so say, of a masculine character, such as burglary, and she included these as instances of women being equal to men. In this day her example in this last mentioned respect was followed by her successors, for in a recent number of the *Women's Signal* there was an instance given of a young woman housebreaker which was given as an instance of women being physically the equal of men. The pit-brow girls were used by the supporters of the Women's Suffrage Movement for that particular purpose. There was a deputation to a former Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) requesting him to include these girls in his Bill and prohibit them from working as described, on the ground that the work was hard and unwomanly. A deputation of those same girls attended this House in their picturesque garb, and by whom was it led? By the leaders of the Women's Suffrage Movement, who had declared that the reason why they supported the claim of these women to do this hard and unwomanly work was, that it showed women were physically the equals of men, and could do the same hard work as men, and that that was the strongest argument in favour of granting them the suffrage. He did not see, at present, any prospect of putting the two sexes on an equality. No one could set bounds to the march of intellect or the discoveries of scientific men; but he could see no chance of the human race being propagated in any other mode than that with which they were familiar. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Looking around them as they walked through the streets, and observing how the standard of height of women had risen as compared with the standard of height among men, one might possibly expect the time when the equality of women and men would be physically, and, as regards stature, an established fact; or, possibly, as was the case with birds of prey, the female might become ultimately bigger than the male, and then men would have to take a back seat. But until this physical alteration was effected he should be a convinced opponent of this Measure, and if ever he happened to be in the House of Commons when it was brought forward, if he did not move its rejection he should, at any rate, vote against it.

On the return of MR. SPEAKER after the usual interval,

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he was sorry that an important question such as this was should be greeted with a certain amount of levity by the House. He would ask the House to look at it in its serious aspect. The hon. Gentleman who moved this Bill apologised for being the only Scotchman whose name was upon the back of the Bill. What surprised him was that there was one Scotchman who would put his name on the back of the Bill, because in his youth he had been nurtured on the works of John Knox, and he remembered especially one of John Knox's works, which was "The Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regimen of women." If Scotchmen had any respect for that great man—whom they all respected in England—he was convinced that they would not say that John Knox's views were to be set aside on account of anything that might be said by recreant Scotchmen—he did not use the word in any invidious sense. It was 30 years ago, he thought, when this question was first submitted to the House of Commons by Mr. John Stuart Mill. About 50 Members voted in favour of it; but he remembered that it was regarded by every Member who went into the Lobby as a huge joke. He was perfectly certain that there was not one Gentleman in the House who voted on that occasion who took the thing seriously, with the exception of Mr. Mill himself. [Sir C. DILKE: "Mr. Bright."] His right hon. Friend said Mr. Bright. He himself happened to be sitting down in the smoking room with Mr. John Bright while the discussion was going on, and Mr. Bright said, "I suppose we must give John Mill a vote, but I cannot say that I am strongly in favour of giving votes to women," and on subsequent occasions he had told him that he regretted on that occasion that he did give a vote for it. He hoped hon. Gentlemen, therefore, would think well before they voted. He admitted that, foolishly, looking upon the thing as a joke, he went into the Lobby as one of those 50 Members; and it was because he might have done some evil upon that occasion that he had made it his special duty to show his repentance by doing what he could ever since to prevent women having votes. It was said that this was a woman's question; but he ventured to point out that it was also a man's question. As a man, he objected to petticoat government, and he also spoke for the vast majority of women, who recognised that they were not fitted to govern in that House, and did not wish to. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He was obliged to call attention to the tactics pursued on this occasion. They seemed to him to be essentially feminine, and they were a forecast of what they might expect if this vote was carried and women were allowed to exercise paramount influence on the affairs of the country. He gathered from what fell from the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill that he did not intend to proceed with the Bill. [Mr. FAITHFULL BEGG: "I made no such statement."] Did he understand the hon Gentleman distinctly to say that he intended to proceed to the Third Reading of this Bill? [Mr. FAITHFULL BEGG: "Yes."] The hon. Gentleman divided different political opinions into three categories; one was as to subjects that no one could understand, and he proceeded to tell them that this Bill was one of the subjects which he could not understand. He had said that the phraseology of the Bill might be bad, that everything in the Bill might be bad, but that he did not trouble himself with the cobwebs of phraseology. He could not help thinking himself that a lady must have drawn up this Bill. He saw the names of the right hon. Member for the Liskeard Division, of an eminent lawyer on this side of the House, and of other equally eminent Gentlemen upon it, but he should like to ask these Gentlemen and the hon. Gentleman who moved it whether they had anything to do with the drawing up of the Bill? The hon. Gentleman's silence gave consent. He should like to know whether he ever took the trouble to read the Bill before it was in print. No, he did not.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I am entirely responsible for the phraseology of the Bill so far as a layman can be responsible for a document of this kind.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said the hon. Gentleman made his position worse. He said he did read the Bill, but he had told them that he did not understand it, and he calmly put it before them without understanding what it meant. The words of the Bill were, that on and after the passing of this Act every woman who is an inhabitant, occupier or tenant of any dwelling place, tenement or building within the borough or county where such occupation exists shall be entitled to be registered as a voter. There was a certain amount of ingenuous cunning in these words, if he might say so. There were two associations for Women Suffrage, and there was a dispute going on between the women suffragists. Some desired that married women should have votes; others desired that married women should not have votes. So far as he could see—and he had taken the opinion of eminent lawyers—this Bill would not give married women votes, although it was intended by it to give married women votes. Surely they ought to know whether this Bill did give married women votes or did not. If this were a Bill for men, would they for a moment go on with it without clearly understanding so essential a point as whether they gave to one-half of the men whom they were going to enfranchise a vote or not? The Bill went on to say that women should be entitled to be registered, but it did not state what were to be the conditions of registration. They knew, in regard to men, that there were certain conditions which had to be fulfilled in order to enable a man to be on the register. One condition was the question of time; but here there was to be no time. Does the hon. Gentleman wish to place women in a different position to men? He did not think he did; and therefore he hardly thought that he did read this Bill before it was printed, or if he did so, that he did not read it with any very great care. The last clause of the Bill said, "Provided always that such woman is not subject to any legal incapacity which would disqualify a man voter." Now, what were the legal incapacities at the present moment? That a man must not be an alien, a lunatic, an idiot—or a Peer. There was actually inserted in this remarkable Bill a special clause to make a distinction between men and women, and to say that idiot, alien, or lunatic women, and Peeresses in their own right, were to have a vote. He did think that a Bill ought to be drawn up in a more practical manner before they discussed it.

Mr. FAITHFULL BEGG thought the phraseology of the Bill was perfectly clear; the object was to attach to women precisely the same disability as was attached to men.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the hon. Gentleman, whatever his opinion was, to look at the words he had quoted. The male voter was subject to the incapacity he had pointed out, but the Bill distinctly said that a woman was not to be. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, grammar was the same whether it applied to men or women. So far as he could see, the only women who would be enfranchised by this Bill would be widows and spinsters who lived alone and had some little shop. It was a thorough property qualification Bill, and, therefore, he should be surprised if many hon. Gentlemen on his own side voted for it. They had heard of the two million toiling women, but they were not the persons who would be enfranchised, so that the very class of women for whose sake hon. Friends of his had advocated female suffrage would not be benefited by this Measure. Very possibly his argument did not affect hon. Gentlemen on the other side. He had been very glad to notice on the other side in the present House of Commons so many young women—so many young men. [*Laughter.*] If he ignored their initial error in being Conservatives he had found them manly and independent in the views they expressed, and he wished to address a few remarks to them. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean had brought in a Bill which provided that every man and woman of full age, whether married or single, should be qualified to vote at Parliamentary or local elections unless disqualified for reason other than sex or marriage, by common law or Act of Parliament. The Bill further provided that no person should be disqualified by sex or marriage from being elected or being a Member of either House of Parliament. If they did away with the barrier of sex, logically they must give the vote to every woman. [*Ministerial cheers.*] What would be the consequence? In electioneering the life of a candidate would be absolutely intolerable. [*Laughter.*] They knew what phase of mind a lady had. She never would understand a plain answer to a question. [*Laughter.*] He had always observed that ladies, for whom he had the highest respect and admiration, were incapable of argument; when one proved to a woman she was wrong she simply repeated in almost the same words her previous proposition. [*Laughter.*] A lady, one of the leading members of the Liberal Women's Federation—he believed that was the name of it—[*a laugh*]—who had been in favour of female suffrage, wrote to him only this morning. She said she was recently founding a Liberal Women's Association when a lady got up and said:—

> "We need a moral vote; no one ought to be allowed to vote whose character does not bear the strictest investigation."

[*Loud laughter.*] He merely mentioned that as an instance of the sort of thing they would be exposed to when women ruled the roast. It must be remembered that women were in the majority. ["Not qualified."] He was pointing out that if they passed this Bill they would in the end have to give women the vote on the same conditions as they gave it to men. [*Ministerial cheers.*] His right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean was perfectly logical in saying that if women were to be electors they ought also to be elected. They themselves would look to that when they got the vote. What would happen? This august assembly would become an epicene club. [*Laughter.*] They would have men and women sitting here together and discussing matters. Women would claim the right to be on the Executive. They had now a Lord of the Admiralty; they would have a Lady of the Admiralty. [*Laughter.*] He really believed that the Speaker's seat would not be sacred, and that it was probable they would have a Speakeress. [*Laughter.*] He took it the Whips would be ladies. If he were allowed to choose the Whips he did not know anything he could not pass through the House. It was a most dangerous and fatal possibility that they would have Whips urging hon. Members, by all the blandishments known to the fair sex, to vote for or against what were their conscientious opinions. Reference had been made to the action of New Zealand on this subject, but he declined to admit that the Mother of Parliaments should be influenced by what the New Zealand Legislature did. Would the hon. Members who cited New Zealand be in favour of a proportionate income tax and divers other schemes which had passed the New Zealand Legislature? Women had votes at municipal elections. Well, he was sorry they had, but he did not think the few women who had such votes would do themselves much harm by it. But he was perfectly certain that when they obtained those votes they would make the fact an argument for claiming the Parliamentary vote. Nor had he any objection to women sitting on Boards of Guardians and School Boards, because there were matters concerning women and children who were under the control of those bodies, which women were best fitted to deal with but to say that there was no distinction between women having a vote for those local bodies and for the election of Members of Parliament was, in his opinion, to take an exceedingly low view of the Imperial Parliament. ["Hear, hear!"] What hon. Member who was in favour of this Measure would appoint a woman to manage his estate or his business? Not one of them; and to say that, because women were elected to sit on Boards of Guardians and School Boards, therefore they had a right to sit in that House, was in his opinion an utter absurdity. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen who were moving in this matter had to face the hard fact that women generally really did not want the suffrage. But they were told that, even were this so, it should not prevent the House from granting it to them, and in this connection the hon. Member who seconded the Motion asked whether the working man really wanted the suffrage before he got it. He was surprised at his hon. Friend using that argument, because he was certainly under the impression that the working man did want the suffrage, and that Parliament gave it to him, not only as a matter of justice, but because he claimed it. ["Hear, hear!"] Then it was urged, as an argument in favour of the Bill, that women had no means at present of expressing their views. Why, they went about the country holding meetings, forming associations, and getting up petitions, and they almost mobbed hon. Members when they were leaving the House. [*Laughter.*] He sometimes thought that, on the whole, ladies had too many means of expressing their views. [*Laughter.*] Assuredly, then, they had the means of expressing their views, but the views they expressed were their own particular views, and they did not represent the views of their sex. ["Hear, hear!"] As to the statement that women really desired the vote, he could only say that he had met a great many women in the course of his life, and he had not found that any such desire existed among them. In fact, he did not believe that one woman out of 100 was the least desirous of obtaining the vote. ["Hear, hear!"] He would state what happened to him at Northampton at the last General Election. Ladies connected with the Women Franchise movement came down in strong force, took a committee room, placarded the town with denunciations of him, and went about the place trying to induce persons to vote against him. Well, he asked a meeting of Liberals whether they had seen those ladies going about the town, and they said they had. Then he said he wanted to know what the husbands of those women were doing, and the men exclaimed: "Nursing the baby"—[*laughter*]—"Washing up the baby's dirty clothes"—[*laughter*]—"Cooking the dinner," or "Cleaning up the room." [*Loud laughter.*] He asked them whether they wished their wives to go galavanting about the country in this way, and whether they were prepared to undertake domestic duties? They said emphatically that they were not, and he did not believe he lost a single vote in consequence of the action of those ladies. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not a question of Conservative or Liberal, for not only were there a couple of Conservative, but there were two or three Liberal candidates in the field besides himself who were in favour of giving women the suffrage, and yet the men of Northampton deliberately came to the conclusion that they preferred sending to Parliament a Radical who was opposed to Women's Suffrage, rather than either a Conservative or a Radical who was in favour of it. ["Hear, hear!"] One of the ladies came to see him—a nice-looking, charming girl—[*laughter*]—and she said, "Is it possible that you are against us?" He said he was, and he gave this instance just to show the kind of way women talked on these matters. What did hon. Members think this lady next said to him? She said, "Do you believe in love?" [*Loud laughter.*] He replied that he did—more or less—[*laughter*]—and he added that he was surprised that so fascinating a young lady had not yet succumbed to the demands of some gentleman. "Well," she replied, "I might have done so; a baronet wanted me to marry him, but I did not love him." [*Laughter.*] And he then told her that, if she would take his advice, she would do a great deal better for herself to go and get a baronet than going about fishing for votes on this question. ["Hear, hear" *and laughter.*] He had noticed that one hon. Gentleman who had supported the Bill charged its opponents with having recourse to sentimental arguments, but he contended that sentiment was wholly on the other side of the matter. ["Hear, hear!"] He was talking the other day on the subject with an esteemed friend on that side of the House, and when he said that he was going to vote against the Bill his friend said, "Had you a mother?" [*Loud laughter.*] He frankly said that he had had a mother; that she did not want the suffrage, and did very well without it. ["Hear, hear!"] But really what had all this to do with the matter? ["Hear, hear!"] He only related those incidents as specimens to show the silly talk that did duty for argument on this question. He had no doubt that there were many hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House who were sincerely and honestly in favour of the Measure on the merits of the question; for instance, men like the right hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney), though he must confess that he was surprised that a man of his robust views should be in favour of it. It was further urged that the proposal ought to be granted on grounds of justice, and they were asked whether it was just to impose taxation without representation? Well, the present Bill would not give representation to women generally even if it were passed. Widows and moneyed spinsters were not the only women who were taxed. There was such a thing as indirect taxation, and all women were subject to it. ["Hear, hear!"] Did hon. Gentlemen think that they would in any way benefit the vast numbers of working women, large numbers of whom were subjected to sweating, by granting the suffrage to widows and moneyed spinsters, who would in no sort of way, and in no sense, represent them? ["Hear, hear" *and murmurs of dissent.*] He did not think so, and when hon. Members talked about Justice demanding the Measure, it should always be borne in mind that the matter was really based on common sense. Nature had made a distinction between men and women, and no Act of Parliament could alter that distinction. [*Laughter.*] Woman had her province, and he would prefer to leave her to it. For women to exercise the Parliamentary vote, to meddle with Parliamentary elections, or to be in Parliament, was as absurd as for men to engage in the occupations of women. He asserted that women were physically unable to fulfil the full duties of citizenship. [An hon. Member: "There are exceptions."] Yes, but they could not legislate for exceptions. They must legislate for the general mass. He knew perfectly well that no man here, with perhaps two or three exceptions, would fight if they were engaged in war abroad, but, if the country was invaded, then it was the duty of every man sound in wind and limb to fight for the country. It is impossible to say that women could fulfil the primary duty of citzenship, which was to defend the country against foreign invasion, unless they went back to the reign of the Amazons. Intellectually, he said, that women had not these gifts which fitted them for being elected. They had got a certain amount of what he might call instinct rather than reason, but they were impulsive, emotional, and had got absolutely no sense of proportion. The tendency of women had been to fall under influence. His hon. Friend the Seconder said it was desirable they should fall under the influence of the Church, meaning all Churches. He thought that Members on that side of the House drew a great line of distinction between religious matters and political matters, and that, while they recognised that the pastors of the different denominations were in their right in exercising influence over their flocks in religious matters, they must not have one half-pennyworth of influence over them in political matters. Woman was essentially an altruist, if he might be allowed to use the expression—she worked through somebody else. The fact was, woman's province was not to go into the market-place and talk. Who was the woman they had respected for ages? Cornelia. Did they suppose that if Cornelia had gone talking in the Forum her name would have come down to them with that respect it had? No. They respected her because she was the mother of the Gracchi—because she brought into the world these Gracchi, and worked through them for the benefit of her country. He did not want women to take part in the rough wrangles and quarrels that distinguished political life. It had always been the rule, since the world began, that it was most undesirable that women should take that active part in public life that men did. The Greek view of women was that the best woman was the woman who was the least heard of. The Roman view was, "the woman who lived chaste, made wool, and looked after her own house." For his part he was of opinion that those views, though old, were sound and solid, and by them he should always stand. He stood there, not only as the advocate of man, but as representing the wishes of the women in protesting against their being given votes, and in saying that the vast mass of women did not want them. If they had the ballot he did not think they would have twenty Members of that House voting for this Bill. He only asked hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House to vote fairly and squarely, and according to their own conscientious opinions. If they did really believe it was desirable that the whole of the women should have votes and should be allowed to sit in that House, and to fulfil all the duties that were now performed by men in public matters, let them by all means vote for this Bill. But he urged them not to vote simply because they imagined that this was not a practical question, and that the Bill would not be pushed forward. The fact was, they pledged themselves by giving a vote for the Bill, because if it was not pushed forward at the present moment another Bill would be brought in later, they would be reminded that they had already voted for a similar Measure, and that they were bound to continue to do so. Always after a large extension of the franchise there was almost immediately a general election. The result of this vote would be that there would be a general election. He showed the strength of his convictions on this subject by urging the House to vote against the Bill, although he thought that in some respects a general election was most desirable. If hon. Gentlemen opposite were not anxious for a general election let them not give a vote, a thoroughly unpractical vote, for a Bill which was drawn up in a fashion truly ridiculous, and which at one moment tried to persuade them that all women would have votes, and, at another moment, that they would not have votes.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said they knew that there were more than 100 Members who would vote for the Bill that day, and they voted because there was a strong feeling outside for the Bill. The hon. Member for Hereford seemed to imply that there was no feeling in Cumberland in favour of it. He happened to know that there were no less than 4,000 women connected with the various political associations in that county, and every one of those associations was in favour of Women's Suffrage. He was glad that there had not been much said that day on the odious lines of voting for this Bill, because women would vote this or that way. He thought that was about the lowest line anybody could take. If all the women were to vote in favour of the publicans he should still be in favour of giving them votes, because he thought it was right and just that they should have them. There could only be two sound and satisfactory reasons why women should not be allowed to take part in Parliamentary elections. One was that they had some defect in their intellect, and the other was that they had some defect in their conscience. Either their head or their heart must be wrong if they were justified in excluding them as they were now excluded. He did not think there was any deterioration in women in regard to character in any way. A diploma of this kind from the hon. Member for Flint was trustworthy. But, without going so far as the hon. Member for Flint, he would say that women were at least as good as men. Then, if they were not too bad for the franchise, they were too stupid? If the stupid were to be excluded from the franchise, how about the illiterate voters? These were entrusted with the franchise, and elaborate precautions were taken to allow them to record their votes. Surely these should be excluded if women were to be excluded. What did the £10 householders know about politics when the Whigs enfranchised them in 1832; or the householders who were enfranchised by the Tories in 1864; or the county voters whom Mr. Gladstone enfranchised in 1884? The way to teach people politics was to let them take part in politics, else it was to act on the principle of the old lady who would not allow her son to go into the water until he had learned to swim. [*Laughter.*] Women would learn politics, and have plenty of teachers when they had votes to give. Many of them were politicians now. Look at the Primrose Dames—did they not talk politics at their meetings? Look at the Women's Liberal Association—were they not at the present time most active among Liberal organisations? It was but a year ago that his hon. Friend Mr. Labouchere took him to address a Women's Liberal Association somewhere in the East End of London. [*Laughter.*] Were not candidates delighted to avail themselves of the services of women? Of course they were; and was it not an extraordinary thing for a Member to accept the assistance of women to influence voters, and yet to say that women who could influence votes were not fit to have a vote themselves? This was more inconsistent than the average politician, and that was saying a good deal. Another argument which had not been used much during the Debate was what he might call the refinement argument, the argument that women were too refined, and would be spoiled if they took part in the rough and tumble of Parties—that they are too good for politics. He read in a newspaper the other day how at Dunedin, New Zealand, where it appeared the women electors outnumbered the men, they returned a man who had been very much opposed to giving the franchise to women, and he explained his position by saying he opposed the extension because women were too good for the franchise, not that the franchise was too good for women. That might be so; he did not know whether that argument would be used. It had been said by so great an authority as Mr. Gladstone, that to adopt Women's Suffrage would be to invite women to leave that position of delicacy, purity and refinement which is the present source of her power. But he was not convinced. If politics degraded women they degraded men; and if there was something degrading in politics, then they had better not take part in them, but leave them to the basest of mankind. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet (Mr. J. Lowther) had in times past expressed the view that the Turf offered a more honourable pursuit than proceedings in the House, but he did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman. In sitting for six months in the House, trying to promote just legislation for the whole country, they were employed in the noblest work men could occupy themselves with. If, as Mr. Gladstone said in one of his articles, all those who lived in a country should love that country and take an interest in it, it was a most patriotic thing to give women votes. He could not understand how any Liberal could be afraid in this matter. He looked upon his hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) as a leader of democrats, as a friend of political economy and of liberty in every shade, and yet there he was shuddering and shaking in his shoes at the prospect of a few women voting for or against him. [*Laughter.*] It was an extraordinary position to take, and it gave him a thrill of pain to contemplate him. Everybody was to have equal justice—except women. An American planter expressed the view that all men are born free except niggers; and similarly his hon. Friend declared all men are born free except women. [*Laughter.*] If women were admitted to the franchise, what harm could they do? Could they make things worse than they were? Mankind had been running the world for some four thousand years, and had made an awful mess of it; could women make it worse with hundred-million Budgets, massacres, famine, riots, and frightful war expenditure all over the world? Would they bring in the drink traffic or do anything to remove evils which, as Mr. Gladstone said, made our people in our slums as miserable and degraded as those of any heathen country? Let us not wrap ourselves in self-complacency and say, "Who can show us any good?" Take women's help in everything that was humane and merciful, everything that would alleviate the lot of our suffering fellow countrymen—that was our duty. He might quote the words of the present Prime Minister, uttered some eight months ago:—

> "It is the improvement of the daily life of struggling millions, the diminution of the sorrows so many are born to, which is the task, the blessed task, that Parliament is called into existence for."

If that be so, then call in women to help in that noble work. We had arrived at a year which should be memorable in the annals of this country, and every day brought suggestions how to celebrate the completion of the sixtieth year of the reign of our Sovereign—a woman—he might say *the* woman of the century. The House might do something worthy of the celebration of this great event, the longest reign in English history, by performing a great act of enfranchisement, which would be a legislative monument for all years to come of statesmanlike justice. ["Hear!"]

COL. WARING (Down, N.) said he was an advocate of the rights of women, but he took a view slightly differing from that of hon. Members who had posed in the part. He was a convert or a pervert. The first time he voted in the House on this subject it was for a Bill similar to the present, and on the present occasion he had the full intention of voting in an opposite sense. He had been convinced by the arguments of women themselves, and held with good reason, that the majority of women, and those whose opinions were best worth having, were strongly opposed to the Bill. He was not without a little experience in the matter, and had the opportunity of knowing the views of a considerable number of ladies in various relations, and he had found them without exception opposed to this Bill becoming the law of the land. The proposer and seconder of the Amendment had gone over the grounds of objection thoroughly, and had dealt with the question from a jocular point of view. That was not his intention. He held the view of women, who were the best judges in this matter, that in accepting the franchise they would surrender more powerful influence than they would receive in political matters. They preferred the indirect power to the direct power with which it was proposed to invest them. This direct power would be exercised only by that class of women of whom samples might be seen outside the doors of the House. He confessed that he did not think the hon. Member for Northampton, or even St. Anthony, would incur much danger in passing through the small crowd in the Lobby. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, it was his opinion; it was matter of taste. If hon. Members found attractions there it was surprising that they attended the Debate. The opinion among women generally was opposed to their introduction into political turmoil. If they had the franchise they would prefer not to use it, and still less would they like to be governed by their fussy sisters who Members might see in the Lobby. What evidence was there that women asked for the franchise? The evidence only of those ladies to whom he had alluded. There had been no demonstration on the other side, simply because those who were opposed to the Measure were those who considered it would be out of their sphere to demonstrate. They had demonstrated indirectly through their husbands, brothers, and sons, and he hoped they would do so effectually on the present occasion. The proposer of this Bill talked about their discarding prejudice. He had no prejudice in this matter. He had already voted for this proposal, and now he was prepared to vote the opposite way, because in the intervening time he had become convinced that to pass such a Measure would be mischievous to the country, mischievous to the sex it was proposed to emancipate, and mischievous to the interests of the world at large. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Bill talked about the military argument. He dared say there were some Members who wished to see the military influence of this country less preponderant than it was, and who thought that if ladies had a vote wars and rumours of wars would cease. He believed that the most militant and most military people were the ladies. Did they ever hear of a woman who would not like to see her son in the Army or Navy, and if she had children in either branch of the service would object to their going to the front? It was said that ladies should have this direct power because their male relations did not represent them. He thought a good many hon. Members would be chary about giving a vote contrary to the desires of his female relatives. It might also be said that, as the local franchise had been given to women, they should, therefore, extend to them the franchise for Imperial purposes. However, that was an entirely different question. In local matters their advice and assistance was most valuable, and he himself assisted his hon. Friend the Member for South Belfast in getting an Act passed last Session to enable ladies to serve as members of Boards of Guardians in Ireland. They were told that this question was a moral question. No doubt it was, but he doubted very much whether the ladies who were anxious to obtain a vote were the best judges of how that moral question could be best solved.

Mr. G. WYNDHAM (Dover) said that, as being in some slight degree responsible for the shape in which this Measure had been presented to the House—in collaboration, of course, with many others of greater experience and of far greater technical knowledge in the matter of drafting than he could pretend to be—he should like, for a moment, to take up the challenge which the hon. Member for Northampton had thrown out. He was sorry the hon. Member was not in his place. His speech amused the House, but it surprised him a little. On the cover of the weekly periodical which they all associated with the hon. Gentleman, there appeared the classic presentment of woman personified, as he had always ingenuously thought, with that wide wisdom, that manly courage, that common sense which the hon. Gentleman attributed to himself that afternoon, and which justified him, in his own opinion, in judging and condemning everyone in this Kingdom—from the Prime Minister in his own Party down to a corporal in a marching regiment. The hon. Member began his speech by a sigh for the good old days. He remembered, he said, when this subject was a jest. Everyone would admit that the hon. Member could give it new life, that in his hands age had not withered it, nor custom staled its manifold variety. It was still amusing; but if the hon. Member could make fun of this matter which was new, he could not produce any new arguments. The arguments he adduced were the old arguments, and in particular he would beg the attention of the House to his use of a familiar device. He hardly touched the merits of the question at all, for he did not call it an attack upon the merits of the question to say in one sentence that women are so subjected to the influence of the other sex that they ought on that account, and that account alone, to be struck off the register, and in the very next sentence to say there were not 20 men in the House who would vote according to their convictions, because they were all subject to the influence of women. As to the shape in which the Measure was presented to the House, it was the result of many Debates in times past. When the hon. Member argued that the House was suspicious, and justly suspicious, of any attempt to capture its assent to abstract resolutions, he associated himself with him. But in times past so many attacks had been made upon the shape in which this Measure was put forward that they dared not bring it forward as, perhaps, they should have done, in the form of a resolution, because if they had brought forward a resolution on the question of Women's Suffrage they should have been told that such a resolution weighed for nothing. They were, then, driven to a Bill. But if a Bill was brought forward, on the other hand, which introduced any question which was rather a question of franchise —whether for men or for women—it gave an opportunity to the enemy. He would assume that they made women who were owners voters, in right of their ownership, and not of their occupation. If they had done so, there was not a Radical who would have voted for the Measure. He would assume, on the other hand, that they had left out the owners and put in women on the larger or service franchise. In such a case there was hardly a Conservative in the House who would have voted for it. Hon. Gentlemen who differed from them might say it was clear they could not frame a Bill on this subject. He denied that altogether. He said if, in that House, it was impossible to invite an opinion upon a question of principle, why then they were restricted by the law they had made from doing the duty which the country expected from them. The country did expect that this House should be able to say whether the sex was to remain under this disability or not, and in this Bill they invited the House to say yea or nay to that question, and invited them to pronounce on no other question of representation whatever. The hon. Member for Northampton, descending into minuter details, tried to frighten people by saying that in this Bill they gave a woman a preferential right over a man in the matter of registration. He did not read it so. They entitled a woman to be placed on the register of voters, but they only entitled her to be placed on as the Revising Barrister acted in accordance with the rules and procedure of his office. This Measure was, in the opinion of its promoters, a Reform Bill, and they declined to associate it in their minds with the terrors which the hon. Member for Northampton had depicted before them. They thought that this Reform Bill had nothing whatever to do with the so-called movement for Women's Rights, whatever might be the merits or demerits of that movement. It had nothing more to do with that movement for Women's Rights than the Reform Bill of 1885 had to do with the propaganda of Jack Cade. On the contrary, they held—and they appealed to the past to support them—that the result of every inclusion of new voters into the electorate had been to minimise the apparent importance of the most extreme advocates of those reform measures. He remembered when he was a boy that the name of the hon. Member for North West Norfolk was a word of terror in good Tory households, while now he was an esteemed and popular Member of that House on both sides. He would name again another question of representation —the question as to whether the religious test should be applied in that House. Mr. Bradlaugh, so long as he fighting for that question, was also a word of terror, but, when he had won the victory on that question of representation, Mr. Bradlaugh was also an esteemed and popular Member of the House. And so, he thought, it would be found that when the franchise was granted to women, who otherwise were capable and were householders, a great deal of the extreme pronunciation of views with which some persons were alarmed would no longer be heard. So long as they did not allow an elector to give effect to his voice constitutionally, he was justified in trying to attract their attention. For his part, he said that before the last Reform Bill he thought an agricultural labourer was quite entitled to "booh" a candidate while he was making a speech, for he had no other way of showing that candidate that he disagreed with him. Now, however, he had no longer any such right to "booh" him. If he did so he was a public nuisance, because he had a remedy in his hands. If he did not agree with the candidate, he could now vote against him. So also if the hon. Member for Northampton had been incommoded by the arguments pressed upon him by certain ladies in this country, if he would pass this Bill, he had the remedy in his hands. He could say, "My dear lady, if you disagree with me, vote against me at the next election; do not trouble me with your arguments now." But that was exactly what the hon. Member feared. In spite of all his imposing attitude of manly courage, what was the real motive of the hon. Member for Northampton in opposing the Bill? It was very transparent. He said that if these ladies had a vote they would make the life of a candidate intolerable. What he meant was, that they would bring the Parliamentary existence of certain Members to an abrupt close. That was really the view of the hon. Member. Mr. Bagehot, in his work on the English Constitution, said that when Lord Eldon was Lord Chancellor of England the only political view he had was that things as they were were consistent with the continued existence of John Scott, Earl of Eldon; but if there were any change how did he know that they would be? So it seemed to be with the hon. Member for Northampton. Things as they were were consistent with his having a seat in that House, but if there was any change he might not any longer be very sure of his seat. [*Laughter.*] What was there in the present representative machinery of this country that claimed sentimental adherence? We spent many thousands a year to get barristers to interpret Acts of Parliament relating to our electoral system. The problem of Women's Suffrage would be presented to the same tribunal, and the technical difficulties which might be involved ought not to affect the decision of the House.

Sir BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton) asked how they were to be sure that ladies would not claim to sit in the House of Commons if they once had Parliamentary votes. If once there was "one man one vote, and every man a vote," how could they deny votes to women? Considering there were 1,100,000 more women than men, and that every woman would have a vote if ever one got it, were they to suppose that when women could swamp the votes of men they would be content to remain outside. If ever they got into Parliament the end of this country would not be far off. The immediate result, however, of this Bill would be the biggest creation of faggot votes ever known. Rich men would buy votes for their wives and daughters, while the wives and daughters of artisans, who were told at every election that they were the backbone of the country, would have no votes. This would work the greatest possible injustice, and he could not possibly vote for such a thing. If the working classes were the backbone of the country, why should not the female backbone of the country have votes. This present House of Commons contained more new Members (and he was one of them) than any previous House, and if they were as wise and sensible as their predecessors they would defeat this most unwise and pernicious Bill by a very large majority. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. JEBB (Cambridge University), in supporting the Bill, said he would confine himself to certain definite arguments for and against the principle of the Bill. Did women really want the vote or not? He remembered very well, in 1892, the last occasion upon which this question was discussed in the House, the present Leader of the House, as he was also then, in winding up the Debate, remarking that he did not know any way in which women could have manifested their desire for the franchise in which they had not manifested it, and he observed that when the agricultural labourers received the franchise in 1885 there was not then more evidence before the country of their desire for the franchise than there was now of such a desire on the part of women. No one knew exactly what proportion of women desired the franchise, but it was well known that a very large number of educated and intelligent women had been active in demanding it. In his opinion the demand among educated and thoughtful women had greatly increased even in the last five years, and at the present moment the number who desired the franchise as compared with the number who desired it in 1892 had very much increased. On what ground was the vote to be refused to women who had the qualification? Two grounds were mentioned, one of which was that women were of an inferior mental capacity to men. But that was no longer maintained. The other ground given was that women could not bear arms in defence of the country; but he submitted that, even in the case of invasion, there were large numbers of men who would probably not be capable of rendering very efficient service. Possibly, if the garrison of Inverness were in need of a librarian, for instance, he might offer himself for the post. [*Laughter.*] In the case of war, women, like men, would have their taxes raised, and he could not imagine that they should be refused the franchise on the ground that they could not bear arms. Then what was the force of the assertion that no legislation remained to be passed in the interests of women which would not have an equally good chance of passing, even if women continued to have no votes? It was an undoubted fact that much legislation in the interest of women had been passed in recent years, but it ought to be remembered that the attention given to that subject had been largely influenced by the fact that during the same period an active movement had been in progress for extending the franchise to women. But such a movement could not be relied on as a permanent force for keeping up the attention of legislators to the interests of women. He granted that legislators had in recent times had no desire whatever to refuse justice to women, but women were necessarily better judges of the needs of women than men could possibly be. It could not be denied that before the extension of the franchise to the agricultural labourer there was an earnest desire to do everything that was just for the agricultural labourer, but after he got the franchise the needs of his class were viewed for the first time from the point of view of that class; and the same was true of every successive extension of the Suffrage. If women had the Suffrage, legislators would legislate in the light of the directly expressed views of women on questions relating to the interests of women. ["Hear, hear!"] He had the honour of being a Member of the Royal Commission appointed to deal with certain educational questions. There were women members of that Commission, and one of the problems with which they had to deal was connected with girls' schools, and the male members found they had very much to learn from the women members. Women's Suffrage was especially desirable in the interests of those women engaged in employment which they shared with men, and in the interests of women who were candidates for employment as to their fitness for which men were at present the sole judges, and had the final power of excluding them. Large numbers of such women were not in a position to take any active part in demanding the Suffrage. The hon. Member who seconded the Bill referred to a large deputation of women which came up from the collieries to represent their views on the subject of female labour in collieries. Many of the women who had been leaders of the movement had taken that part not only because they themselves desired the franchise, but also in the interests of women engaged in such employments as he had mentioned. It was true that the omission of the Lodger Franchise from the Bill would exclude numbers of women for whom the Suffrage was especially desirable, but he submitted that this was eminently a question in which it was desirable to proceed circumspectly, and the omission of the Lodger Franchise was not a reason for voting against the principle of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] It was said that women would be drawn out of their proper sphere. He did not see how voting would do that. They already canvassed and spoke on platforms, and candidates for Parliament were only too glad to get them as canvassers. It was further contended that domestic interests would be neglected; but did domestic life make larger demands on women than professional life on men? Then it was said that the relations between the sexes would be revolutionised. He was unable to see how that result was to follow. If anything they could do in that House was capable of subverting the fundamental laws of nature, the powers of the House were very much greater than he took them to be. A revolution in the relations between man and woman was not likely to occur until "human nature is other than it is now." As to the suggestion that women would claim seats in Parliament if they obtained the franchise, there was absolutely no logical or practical connection between giving women votes and giving them seats in Parliament. Clergymen had votes, but they could not sit in the House. It might be said that the Bishops represented them. Were men then to be looked on as Bishops, and women as a sort of inferior Clergy? It was said, again, that women would believe too much in the remedial power of legislation, and that if they had the franchise there would be some danger of increasing the tendency to over-legislation. What proof was there that women held that belief any more than men? And if they did, what reason was there to doubt that a little experience would cure them of the illusion? He now came to an argument which deserved respectful attention. It was that women were by nature more emotional and excitable than men. It was argued that a leaven of female voters in the electorate might be dangerous at times of crisis, when popular feeling ran high—as, for instance, at times when the issue of peace or war was in question. But what proof was there that women were on the average more emotional and excitable than men? It would certainly be difficult for them to be more so than some men, and he did not know by which process it was to be established that as a sex they were so. He should say that as a sex they were more practical than men. He would now introduce a few considerations on the other side. The calamities of war fell on women even more heavily than on men, because war desolated the home. At such a crisis as that supposed, women would have an even stronger motive than men for using their influence against any rash or precipitate movement of public opinion. ["Hear, hear!"] At such a moment women would, probably, be often a moderating force. Another case in which the supposed emotional temperament of women was represented as a danger was the case of suffering caused by improvidence or vice. It was alleged that women would lean towards an excessive and misplaced clemency. Now it was to be noted that women were not more lenient, but usually harder and more severe, than most men in their judgment of certain delinquencies; for example, in their judgment of suffering incurred by thriftlessness—for women were accustomed to the *details* of economy, and were apt to resent the absence of thrift with just severity. Again, women are more severe than men towards all offences against the life of the family. And, further, a wider consideration applies here. The women who had been most active in claiming the Suffrage were familiar with the arguments which had been used against their claim. They would be especially on their guard against justifying the objectors by committing those errors which their opponents asserted that women, as a sex, would be sure to commit. And the less educated portion of the female electorate would be influenced in such cases by the example of those women to whom they would look as their natural leaders in such a matter. Further, the political responsibility of the Suffrage would of itself tend to steady and sober the judgment of women. If, on some public questions, some women had shown a lack of that quality, this had not been due simply to the temperament of woman, but also to the fact that hitherto they had not had the direct responsibilities of active citzenship. It was objected that, as there were more women than men in this country, the votes of men might ultimately be swamped by the votes of women. This argument assumed that men and women voters would form opposite camps. But how, he asked, was this argument to be reconciled with the other argument that there was no reason for giving women votes, inasmuch as all that they could want had already been done for them by male legislators? For, if that were the case, why should the votes of all women be arrayed against the votes of men? The two arguments contradicted each other, and the first, that all women would vote on one side and all men on the other, was flagrantly absurd. What were the probable advantages of Women's Suffrage? An eminent writer had said that women were, on the whole, more conscientious than men. Without denying or affirming that, it might be said that the number of women who would vote with a real and intelligent sense of civic *duty* would probably be at least as large as the number of men who did so. When a woman had some definite duty set before her, she was at least as scrupulous in the discharge of it as the average man, especially if it demanded self-effacement and self-sacrifice. The new element which Women's Suffrage would add to the electorate would probably have the quality of conscientiousness in a high degree. The result would tend to increase the importance of character in public life, and that was a result which they would all welcome. It had been said by the hon. Member for Hereford that in the State of Washington the Suffrage was given to women and then taken away. He could not help wondering that the hon. Member who used that argument against this proposal to give the Suffrage to women did not see that it cut both ways, because the reason for the withdrawal of the privilege at Washington might have been that the male voters found the female voters more fastidious than they desired. Then women knew a great deal about the life of the poor, and if they obtained the vote questions affecting the social condition of the masses would come to the front. Women would be opposed by instinct to violent or revolutionary changes, and to Measures involving confiscation of property. Let no one suppose that he meant that women, as such, would collectively lean to one of the great parties in the State rather than to the other. He could imagine nothing more absurd than to predict that the female sex, if enfranchised, would prove to be collectively Conservative or collectively Liberal. What might safely be predicted was that the general influence of women would tend to moderate extreme tendencies on either side in politics. It would be no slight gain from Women's Suffrage if, through it, mothers who had taken an intelligent interest in the public affairs of their country, and in the duties of citzenship, were thereby better fitted to educate their children in such thoughts and aims as would tend to make them patriotic and public-spirited men and women. When he weighed the objections which had been urged against Women's Suffrage, and placed in the other scale the advantages which might reasonably be expected from it, he could feel no doubt to which side the balance inclined. He supported this Bill, not only because it was just, but also because he believed it to be expedient in the public interest. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I do not feel as if I ought to give a silent vote upon this Bill. It seems to me that if there ever was a question upon which people ought to have the courage of their opinions it is this. ["Hear, hear!"] They ought to form an opinion and act upon it according to their convictions. It has been agreed all through this discussion that we are not dealing merely with the details of this particular Bill. That, I think, is generally admitted by both sides. What we are dealing with is a principle of the highest possible importance and of the gravest possible consequences. We have to consider it not in the least, I should hope, with reference to speculations as to the effect of that principle upon political parties—["hear, hear!"]—but with reference to the result which it will have not only upon the present, but upon the future interests of this country. I suppose that if this Bill is intended to do anything it is intended to assert ultimately the identical rights of women to exercise the electoral franchise with men. I shall not discuss the question on the ground of the distinction between local and Imperial questions. Everybody must feel that there is a real and solid distinction between them. ["Hear, hear!"] You cannot import the mere fact of female suffrage in local matters as a substantial and far less a conclusive argument in favour of female suffrage in Imperial matters. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why not?"] If that does not commend itself to the hon. Member he can answer me. To my mind the point is obvious. I decline altogether to enter upon invidious comparisons of the merits or capacities of the two sexes, for it requires a man with more courage than I possess to make distinctions of that kind. [*Laughter.*] But some Gentlemen have entered upon that dangerous ground. They will find abundance of such discussion in the modern literature of the day—[*laughter*]—conducted, I think, to a great degree, probably to the largest degree, by the more numerous sex. [*Laughter.*] I shall confine myself to one single point, a dry, statistical point, which is incapable of contradiction and introduces no controversy—namely, the numerical relations of the two sexes. That has been stated already over and over again in this Debate. There are in this country 1,200,000 more women than men. This is practically a Bill for the ultimate enfranchisement of that majority. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member for

Durham argued upon that basis. He did not proceed with the caution of the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, who held out as an encouragement to men in this matter that this would be such a very small Bill. It is not a small Bill in the consequences which it may entail. It is a very great Bill, for you cannot resist the ultimate results of this Measure. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member for Northampton referred to the Bill of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. That is a Bill for universal manhood suffrage, and if that principle is ultimately accepted this Bill will lead as a consequence to universal female suffrage. There is not an arugument used by the hon. Member for the University just now which is not applicable to the ultimate extension of the suffrage to all women. That is the question upon which you are to vote to-day; that is the consideration that you ought to have in your minds. The hon. Member for the University asked what connection there is between voting powers and a seat in the Legislature. Well, there is the most intimate connection. My right hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen, the greatest authority upon that question, tells me that in the American States, where the vote has been given to women the capacity for a seat in the Legislature has also been given as a matter of course. Therefore we can see what is the character and magnitude of this question. No man can doubt that at some time or other—it may be sooner, it may be later—all the restrictions, or most of the restrictions which are now placed upon male suffrage will be removed. These things wait sometimes a great deal longer than people hope, but they come quicker sometimes than people expect. But those restrictions will be removed. The hon. Member for the University of Cambridge says that it is not to be expected that all men will vote on one side and all women on the other. No man expects that, but is it not perfectly clear that where you have a majority of 1,200,000 those who possess that majority must in the long run have the determining voice? Then this is a very fundamental change in the constitution of the country. [*Cheers*]. No one can doubt that. It is to establish what I think was called in the course of this Debate a change upon an Amazonian basis; you are going to establish the electorate on a popular womanhood majority. In my opinion that may be a good thing or a bad thing, but it is not a thing to be disposed of on a Wednesday afternoon. [*Cheers.*] If a proposal so fundamentally affecting the whole Parliamentary Constitution of this country is to be entertained, not in a trivial Bill, but in a discussion of a great principle with enormous consequences, it ought to be produced on the authority of a responsible Government. [*Cheers.*] I do not see any indications to-day that Her Majesty's advisers are prepared to take the responsibility of making any such recommendation. [*Laughter and Cheers.*] Therefore it appears to me that this is not the manner and this is not the occasion to inaugurate the establishment of such a momentous change. This is a question which I think does not come within the ordinary category of these Wednesday debates, the value of which I entirely admit. I attach to it consequences which for good or for evil are of the most momentous character in the future of this Empire. I am not entitled at all to express any opinion as to what are the real sentiments of women on this subject. Each man must form his own judgment according to his own lights on that matter. Several hon. Gentlemen have expressed their opinions, among them the hon. Member for the Cambridge University. I am sure that his opinion is gathered from the most enlightened sources, but he qas not gathered it, I am afraid, from his eminent studies in the ancient classics, particularly in the pages of Aristophanes. [*Laughter.*] To my mind, and according to my experience of what I have observed and learned, I should say that the great majority of women do not desire to have the Parliamentary vote. [*Cheers.*] I have come to the conclusion, therefore, and I think it my duty to express it to the House, that it is not wise or expedient, nor is this a proper occasion for the House of Commons, by what I can hardly call in all respects a considerate vote, to endeavour to establish a principle of this kind, not on the responsibility of those who generally lead or advise the House, but by what I can only call on this occasion a catch vote to determine a question of this enormous consequence. I feel compelled, therefore, to give my vote against this Bill. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) thought that the advocates of this Bill were to be congratulated on the fact that his right hon. Friend had refused to give a silent vote on this occasion. He had, however, given a silent vote before now. Indeed, he had heard him declare that he would never undergo the degradation of speaking on this question. [*Laughter.*] Why had he spoken to-day? It was a good augury; they were going to win. [*Ironical laughter.*] What was the kind of argument addressed to the House whenever any discussion arose on women's suffrage? He always asked those who were debating the question to substitute men for women, and to see whether the same argument would not apply. His right hon. Friend, disdaining the question as to the moral constitution of men and women, based his argument on the firm principle of numerical superiority. They had heard that argument used in respect of men. [*Cheers.*] His right hon. Friend had in previous years heard the argument used with regard to the admission of the artisan class to the franchise and he had heard it said that the admission of the artisans would swamp the men of property and intelligence, and though they might impose what checks and limitations they chose to the progress of manhood suffrage, the artisans would overwhelm the other classes. He remembered that on one occasion Mr. Lowe used an illustration to the effect that the artisans were so numerous that it might be said, as Curran said of the fleas, "if united they could pull a man out of bed." [*Laughter.*] If, therefore, the artisans were united they could break down all the limitations which were against their wishes. Had they done so? Again, it was said that if the women united in that far distant time when there was absolute equality between men and women in respect of voting, the women might outvote the men. There was the same unfounded apprehension with respect to women as previously existed with respect to the labouring classes. He was astonished that his right hon. Friend, who had listened with disdain to similar arguments when applied to different classes of men, did not see how it disposed of the same question when it was based on the numerical argument. Then his right hon. Friend said that if the change were to be made at all it should not be voted on a Wednesday afternoon—[*cheers*]—and that it must be introduced by a responsible Minister. Did his right hon. Friend say that when the extension of the county franchise was proposed, or when household suffrage in the boroughs was brought forward? Not at all. Then it was a very proper exercise for the opinion of the House, if not to effect and promote legislation, at least to educate Ministers for the future. He hoped, therefore, that the House of Commons would disdain the notion that it had to wait for the Ministers of the Crown before it expressed its opinion as to whether women be enfranchised or not. The whole of these arguments were a thorough illustration of "the fears of the grave and the follies of the wise." They were afraid of a vast upsetting of human society, of overturning the relation of the sexes, and of altering the constitution of human nature. The House might do many things, but it could not achieve those ends. Those fears as to the dreadful consequences of this change recalled to his mind what was said by an even more advanced authority than his right hon. Friend 60 years ago. Hon. Members knew that before the old House of Commons was burnt down women were admitted to hear the Debates. There was a ventilating cylinder in the centre of the hall, and there was a gallery down which the ladies peeped and listened. When the question arose as to the rebuilding of the House there was a discussion as to whether there should be a gallery for the ladies. Sir John Cam Hobhouse declared then that "life would be intolerable if there was to be a Ladies' Gallery." [*Laughter.*] Those were the terrors which Sir John held out in those days, and they were just as substantial as those with which his right hon. Friend now tried to frighten the House. A former Speaker once interfered in a Debate in Committee to express his opinion that if a Ladies' Gallery were provided, society as at present constituted could not exist. [*Laughter.*] But society had existed in spite of the Ladies' Gallery, and it would exist in spite of the passing of this Bill that afternoon. [*Cheers.*]

*Mr. FAITHFULL BEGG rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

*Mr. SPEAKER: I think it right that the House should have an opportunity of saying whether it does or does not desire to come to a decision on the Bill. I, therefore, accept the Motion.

The House divided:—Ayes, 214; Noes, 170.—(Division List—No. 15—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Aird, John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arch, Joseph
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. Manch'r)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigham, John Charles
Bousfield, William Robert
Brigg, John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carson, Edward
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Channing, Francis Allston
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clough, Walter Owen
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Currie, Sir Donald
Davenport, W. Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Drucker, A.
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Heay
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hall, Sir Charles
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hon. Ld. Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hon. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, James
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swans'a)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Logan, John William
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Marks, Henry Hananel
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
More, Robert Jasper
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Kelly, James
Oldroyd, Mark
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parnell, John Howard
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pinkerton, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randell, David
Rankin, James
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Smith, Abel (Herts.)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Souttar, Robinson
Spencer, Ernest
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart

Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan,E.)
Thorburn, Walter
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Hud'rsf'ld.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. Faithfull Begg and Mr. Atherley-Jones.

NOES.

Allen,W. (Newc.-under-Lyme.)
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn. Herbert Henry
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach,Rt.Hn. Sir M.H. (Bristol)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bethell, Captain
Bill, Charles
Birrell, Augustine
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles,T.Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, Alexander H.
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, James A.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon.J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain,J.Austen,(Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Cook, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Crean, Eugene
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curzon,Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lanc.S.W.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon.SirWilliam Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ. (Manch.)
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Folkestone, Viscount
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Garfit, William
Goschen,Rt.Hn. G.J.(St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Gunter, Colonel
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Heath, James
Hoare,Edw.Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hopkinson, Alfred
Howard, Joseph
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jessel,Captain Herbert Merton
Joicey, Sir James
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kay-Shuttleworth,Rt.Hn.SirU.
Kenny, William
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lambert, George
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowther, Rt. Hon.James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McArthur, William
McCalmont,Maj.-Gen.(Ant'mN)
McDermott, Patrick
McEwan, William
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Mundella,Rt.Hn.Anthony John
Myers, William Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Keefe, Francis Arthur
O'Malley, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Plunkett, Hon. Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Quilter, William Cuthbert
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Ridley,Rt.Hon.Sir Matthew W.
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Russell, Gen. F.S. (Cheltenham)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sheehy, David
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edwd. Jas. (Somerset)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stock, James Henry
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Usborne, Thomas
Walton, John Lawson
Waring, Col. Thomas
Webster, SirR.E.(Isle of Wight)
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes, Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Labouchere

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question." The House divided:—Ayes, 228; Noes, 157. (Division List—No. 16—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Aird, John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, William (Middlesex)
Arch, Joseph
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Ascroft, Robert
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baker, Sir John
Balfour, Rt. Hon A. J. (Manch'r.)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bousfield, William Robert
Brigg, John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carson, Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Channing, Francis Allston
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cozens-Hardy, Herbert Hardy
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Drucker, A.
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Fardell, Thomas George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Matthew (Durham)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hall, Sir Charles
Harrison, Charles
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hill, Rt. Hn. A. Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hogan, James Francis
Holburn, J. G.
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, George
Kenyon, James
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb.)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Swnsea)
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Logan, John William
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macaleese, Daniel
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McDermott, Patrick
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Marks, Henry Hananel
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
More, Robert Jasper
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Oldroyd, Mark
O'Malley, William
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parnell, John Howard
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pinkerton, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randell, David
Rankin, James
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robinson, Brooke
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berksh.)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles (Prestwich)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)

Smith, Abel (Herts.)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Souttar, Robinson
Spencer, Ernest
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thorburn, Walter
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Walrond, Sir William Hood
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Hud'rsf'ld)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. Faithfull Begg and Mr. Atherley-Jones

NOES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith-(Hunts.)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M.H. (Bri'l)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bethell, Commander
Bigham, John Charles
Bill, Charles
Birrell, Augustine
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn)
Brassey, Albert
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, James A.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J.(Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen(Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Coddington, Sir William
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref')
Cranborne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cross, Alexandra (Glasgow)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lancs.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Donelan, Captain A.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H.(South'ton)
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J.(Manc'r)
Fisher William Hayes
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Folkestone, Viscount
Garfit, William
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G.J.(St.G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Gunter, Colonel
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hoare, Edw. Brodie(Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutton, Alfred E. (Yorks.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Joicey, Sir James
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenny, William
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lambert, George
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McArthur, William
McCalmont, Maj. Gen. (Ant'mN)
McEwan, William
M'Hugh, E. (Armagh, S.)
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Mowbray, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Mundella, Rt. Hon Anthony John
Myers, William Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Kelly, James
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Quilter, William Cuthbert
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, John G. (Oxford Univ.)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Taylor, Francis
Thornton, Percy M.
Usborne, Thomas
Walton, John Lawson
Waring, Col. Thomas
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell(Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Labouchere and Colonel Lockwood.

Main Question put, and agreed to: Bill Read a Second time amid loud cheers, and committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

LICENSES (IRELAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

FACTORY ACT (FISHING TRADE) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Clause 1: Committee report progress; to sit again Monday next.

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) (No. 2) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday 12th February.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Friday.

SUPPLY.

Committee deferred till Friday.

EDUCATION ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND) ACT (1885) AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

Clause 1: Committee report progress; to sit again upon Wednesday 16th June.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till tomorrow.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Friday

MOTIONS.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Truck Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Mr. Philip Stanhope, and Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda); presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 115.]

SUCCESSION SCOTLAND.

Bill to assimilate the Laws of Heritable with those of Moveable Succession in Scotland, and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Haldane, Dr. Farquharson, Sir William Dunn, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Ure, Mr. Buchanan, and Mr. Hedderwick; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday 3rd March, and to be printed.—[Bill 116.]

House adjourned at Five minutes before Six o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 4th February 1897.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for codifying the law relating to Marine Insurance, was presented by the Lord Herschell; read 1ª; and to be printed.—[No. 10.]

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

M. Lansdowne.
E. Lathom.
(L. Chamberlain.)
E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Winchilsea and Nottingham.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Cadogan.
E. Belmore.
E. Harrowby.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Wharncliffe.
E. de Montalt.
E. Crewe.
E. Carrington.
V. Sidmouth.
V. Oxenbridge.
L. de Ros.
L. Clinton.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle.
(E. Cork and Orrery.)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Churchill.
L. Colchester.
L. Wigan.
(E. Crawford.)
L. Poltimore.
L. Kintore.
(E. Kintore.)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Fermanagh.
(E. Erne.)
L. Monk-Bretton.
L. Sudley.
(E. Arran.)
L. Northington.
(L. Henley.)
L. Monkswell.
L. Colville of Culross.

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Committee unless otherwise ordered.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Ordered, that a Standing Committee be appointed for the consideration of such Public Bills as may be committed to it by the House.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

E. Cowper.
E. Stanhope.
E. Waldegrave.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle.
(E. Cork and Orrery.)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Kintore.
(E. Kintore.)
L. Colville of Culross.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Select Committee appointed: The Lords following, with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

D. Richmond.
D. Saint Albans.
M. Salisbury.
M. Ripon.
M. Breadalbane.
E. Lathom.
(L. Chamberlain.)
E. Waldegrave.

E. Mount Edgcumbe.
E. Belmore.
E. Harrowby.
E. Bradford.
E. Camperdown.
E. Strafford.
E. Kimberley.
E. de Montalt.
E. Cranbrook.
E. Ancaster.
V. Oxenbridge.
V. Knutsford.
L. Balfour.
L. Boyle.
(*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Churchill.
L. Colchester.
L. Ker.
(*M. Lothian.*)
L. Rosebery.
(*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Rowton.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Herschell.
L. Welby.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Monday next. (*The Lord Herschell*)—[No. 12.]

ARMY (INCREASE OF STRENGTH).

*Viscount de VESCI rose to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to lay before Parliament proposals for an increase in the strength of the Army, and, if so, in what arms; by what number of battalions it was proposed to increase the strength of the infantry; whether it was proposed to add to the Brigade of Guards, and in what manner; and whether, if the strength of the Brigade of Guards was increased, it was proposed to place the brigade on the roster for foreign service in time of peace, and under what conditions. He congratulated the Secretary of State for War on the brighter prospects of the military measures of the Government this Session as compared with last, when the Bills brought in were, he might say, almost muddled out of existence in the arrangements made for public business. But even at the beginning of this Session the Government did not seem to appreciate thoroughly the importance of this question, for in the Speech from the Throne only a very cursory hint was given that these military measures were to be introduced. However, a change had now supervened, and there was some prospect that the measures introduced in another place would be perfected in the course of the present Session. The organisation of the infantry as it at present existed was, it would be remembered, first initiated in a memorandum of the illustrious Duke, the late Commander-in-Chief. Under that organisation territorial regiments were formed out of the existing two-battalion regiments of the Army, and by linking together the then existing single-battalion regiments. Depôts were also formed of two companies from each battalion. The scheme was that one battalion should always be abroad and one at home. This supposed symmetrical system was now out of joint, and practically was nowhere in working order. There might have been some numerical miscalculation as to the military needs and requirements of India and the Colonies, or it might be that those needs and requirements had increased since the establishment of the system. But the fact remained that it no longer worked. The Committee presided over by Lord Wantage, in 1892, called attention to the fact that, since 1888, there had been an average of about 11 battalions in excess abroad; and, in the following year, a work was published, under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, and edited by General Goodenough, which stated that, out of the 141 battalions of the Army, 76 were then abroad, 52 being in India. In regard to the territorial system, his noble Friend would no doubt explain what was now the number of infantry battalions at home and abroad, and by what number of battalions it was intended to increase the infantry. The latter part of the question standing in his name on the Paper was of peculiar interest to many Members of their Lordships' House who had served in the Brigade of Guards. It was reported that the Secretary of State proposed to add two battalions to the Guards' Brigade, making nine in all.

Many of them would agree that that would be a distinct advantage, for he believed that in a very short time, with the reinforcements which they would receive from the Reserve, it would be possible to put into the field two efficient brigades of three battalions each. It was also reported that the Secretary of State proposed to relieve the strain on the battalions of the infantry of the line by putting the Guards on the roster for foreign service in the time of peace. In considering this subject it was necessary to remember the present condition of enlistment and service in the Guards. Most men were enlisted for three years with the colours and nine years with the Reserve. This system had succeeded in filling the ranks with a class of men who for efficiency and appearance, and in every other respect, were fully equal to any men he had ever known. The Guards were quartered in London, Windsor, and Dublin, and their duties were finding "guards," and what was known as "sentry go." The work was very onerous and trying to health. Now, when they considered the foreign service which was open to the Brigade, they found that it was only India, Egypt, and the Mediterranean stations to which they could be sent. As far as India was concerned, the whole system of recruiting the Brigade would have to be altered, for the men would have to go on the long-service system. But apart from that consideration, he should be glad if a Brigade of Guards were stationed in India. It would be very advantageous to have a brigade permanently stationed there, so that the men might become acclimatised, and inured to the conditions of Indian service. The advantage would be realised in the event of any great war in our Eastern Empire, when reliefs would be required. But as to the Mediterranean garrisons, it should be remembered how heavy were the duties there of finding guards, and of sentry work in the fortresses. It was the same kind of heavy work that the Guards had to perform at home. There would be no prospect or means of giving the men military field instruction in Malta or Gibraltar. To all these questions he had no doubt his noble Friend had given due consideration; and he would conclude by asking him to remember how necessary it was that the ranks of the Brigade at home should be kept full of thoroughly efficient men. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I believe it has been pretty well understood for some time past that the Government had it in contemplation to add to the strength of the Army, and I am therefore quite ready to give my noble Friend the information for which he asks. I hope it will not be disappointing to him, because I have observed that of late there have been current statements attributing to us the intention of increasing the Army very far beyond what we believe to be the necessities of the case, and very far beyond what, considering the already very large expenditure for the purposes of Imperial defence, we think would be either proper or desirable. I think the nature and extent of the difficulty with which we have to deal is very well known. It is quite clear that it is well known to my noble Friend from what fell from him during the course of his speech. If I had to describe that difficulty in a single sentence I should say that it would be found in the inability of that portion of the Army which is at home to support that portion of it which is abroad. I wish in the few words which I have to say to confine myself mainly to that part of the case. Of course I am aware that there are many other important questions which may fairly be debated in this connection. There may be a difference of opinion as to the merits of the short service system as we know it here, there may be a want of agreement as to the force which we ought to be able to put into the field for home defence or for expeditionary purposes, there may be people who hold that the efficiency of our home Army is unduly sacrificed to the exigencies of the Army abroad, and who doubt the wisdom of relying so greatly on the Reserve for rendering the home Army fit for war. I shall be quite prepared, if your Lordships should desire it, to discuss these questions at the proper time, but in the few words which I wish to address your Lordships to-night I would rather limit myself to a more restricted aspect of the case, and to ask you whether, given an Indian Army of its present strength, given colonial garrisons of the strength at which our advisers tell us they ought to stand, given the withdrawal of a certain number of troops for special services in different parts of the world, have we left at home enough men to support the force which is thus continually absent from the United Kingdom? The answer must, I think, be in the negative. I believe it has been evident for some time, not only to military experts, that our present system of Army organisation has been worked under conditions which absolutely precluded the possibility of its success. If I may borrow an expression used by my noble Friend, I would say it has been evident for some time that our system has got a little out of joint. What was the fundamental principle of the short-service system introduced 25 years ago by Lord Cardwell, and accepted by successive Governments? That principle was that each of the double-battalion regiments of which the Army is composed would, under ordinary circumstances, always have one battalion abroad and another battalion to support it at home. That is the bed rock of the system. It ought to give us a battalion abroad at full strength and in a high state of efficiency, and another battalion at home on a lower strength, and containing a large proportion of young soldiers. A battalion whose first duty it is in time of peace to supply the linked battalion abroad with the necessary drafts, but which in time of war is completed for service by the addition of men from the Army Reserve The system contemplates and provides for the temporary absence of the home battalion whenever its services may be required out of the United Kingdom. The regimental depôt is then expanded to dimensions sufficient to enable it to supply the drafts required by the two absent battalions, both of which for the time have to depend upon the depôt. It cannot, however, be too clearly understood that this arrangement is intended to provide only for a temporary state of things, and is not appropriate for the purpose of supplying a chronic deficiency in the home establishment. It has numerous disadvantages. It causes, in the first place, that irregularity in the flow of recruits which was so strongly deprecated by the Wantage Committee. Recruits cannot be so effectively trained at a depôt as with a battalion. It supplies our foreign requirements at the expense of our effective home garrison. It entails the separation of the home battalion from the reserve which is vital to its efficiency for war. I have no hesitation in saying that the process of sending home battalions abroad and substituting expanded depôts, is one which can only be justified as a temporary expedient. My conclusion, therefore, is, if it can be shown that there is a permanent deficiency in the number of our home battalions. that deficiency should be met by a permanent increase in the Army. If this be so, it follows clearly that our normal condition should be one of equilibrium between the home and the foreign establishments. Our complaint is that this salutary rule has been ignored, and that at no time since 1872 has that condition of equilibrium been really maintained. I will not occupy the time of the House in explaining how this has come to pass. The requirements of the Empire have grown, special calls have been made upon the Army, troops have been sent abroad for temporary purposes and have not been restored to the home establishment, with the result that, instead of having maintained equality between the home establishment and the establishment abroad, we have at this moment a deficiency of no less than 11 battalions on the home establishment. We have now in all 141 battalions of infantry of the Line; of these India claims 52, while the already authorised garrisons of our coaling stations, some of which are in our opinion below their proper strength, absorb 18 more. In addition to this we have three battalions in Egypt and three extra battalions in South Africa. Your Lordships will see that these figures show that we have now 76 battalions abroad to 65 at home, or, in other words, a total deficiency of 11 battalions. This is a condition of things in which we are unable to acquiesce. It may, no doubt, be fairly assumed that some of the battalions now abroad are only temporarily absent, and pending their withdrawal, or until it is clearly shown that their absence is a permanent one, we may continue to provide for them by those temporary expedients which I explained just now. But in our belief the demand of the military authorities for some steps to be taken to improve the state of the account as between the home and the foreign establishment is irresistible. It is a demand which has been pressed upon us by the late, as well as by the present, Commander-in-Chief, by the whole of our present military advisers, and, I am almost tempted to add, by the opinion of everyone. whether soldier or civilian, who has ever paid serious attention to these questions. We have determined to do something to meet that demand, and we have considered, having regard to considerations of economy as well as of efficiency, in what manner it would be most advantageous to strengthen the home establishment. One proposal in particular has attracted our attention. It is not a new one, for it was put forward five years ago by the Committee presided over by Lord Wantage. I refer to the proposal that to the seven existing battalions of the Guards two new battalions should be added, and that of the nine battalions three should be stationed abroad. The advantages of such an arrangement are obvious. From the point of view of the Guards themselves, the increase is certainly in itself desirable. The present organisation of the brigade is faulty from the military point of view. If the number of the battalions be increased from seven to nine each regiment will have the same number of battalions, and the Guards will be strong enough, which they are not now, to send out for active service a division of six battalions, leaving three battalions at home. On the principle that you cannot have too much of a good thing, no one will, I take it, dispute that, if to the existing magnificent force which the brigade provides we are able to add some 2,000 officers and men, the brigade itself and the Army will be the gainers. It must, however, be clearly understood that we are able to recommend this increase and to justify the expenditure which it involves only upon condition that we are allowed to make use of the brigade to help us in overcoming our difficulties, and to require from it a reasonable contribution towards the relief of the present strain on the Army system. I say "a reasonable contribution" because we recognise that the position and traditions of Her Majesty's Guards are exceptional, and that it is not desirable to place them in respect to liability to service out of the United Kingdom upon the same footing as the rest of the Army. Our proposal, then, is that of the nine battalions of the Guards three shall be abroad. We propose that their tour of service out of England shall be a short one. The exact details are not yet settled. We shall spare no pains to settle them so as to disturb existing arrangements as little as possible, and to leave unimpaired the conditions and efficiency of the brigade. But on one or two points I can be more explicit. If the tour of foreign service is to be a short one it is desirable that the part of the brigade to be employed out of the United Kingdom should not be taken far from home, and we propose that it should be stationed in the Mediterranean. As to the length of the tour, it is obvious that if of every three battalions one battalion is always to be abroad, whatever the length of the tour may be, each battalion must spend one-third of its time away from home. The actual duration of the tour will require careful examination and adjustment, particularly with reference to the effects on recruiting, and on the men engaged for three years' service, of whom there are a large number in the brigade; and, must obviously depend to some extent on the station selected. Our idea is—and here we are doing what we have been given to understand will be most agreeable to the Guards themselves—that the three battalions should be stationed together, under a brigadier of the Guards, and we propose Gibraltar, in the first instance, as in these circumstances the most convenient station. It is clear, however, that subsequent experience may, even in the interests of the brigade itself, render a reconsideration of this point desirable. We propose this year to send one battalion only. That battalion we intend to relieve next year. We shall have ample time in which to consider the detail of the scheme before it is fully carried out, and I have no doubt that many useful suggestions will occur to the military authorities in the meantime. The result of bringing into use three Guards battalions for foreign service will be that three Line battalions now abroad will be brought home, and that three other Line battalions abroad will no longer be in the position of having no home battalions to support them. In other words, we shall diminish our account of foreign battalions of the Line by three, and increase our home establishment by the same number. The addition of two new battalions to the Guards will therefore enable us, in so far as the disparity between the home and the foreign establishments is concerned, to diminish the deficiency in the former to the extent of no less than six battalions, or, to put it in another way, if we had endeavoured to arrive at the same result by creating new battalions of the Line, we should have to create three new pairs of battalions, of which half would have been abroad and the other half at home. If we had adopted this course the cost to the public would have been very largely increased. I am assured that the extra annual charge would be about £200,000, and besides this an expenditure of about half-a-million for additional barrack accommodation would have been inevitable. It would be mere affectation on my part to deny that in some quarters the change which we propose to make is regarded with a certain amount of apprehension. I have heard it said that it will be detrimental both to the officers and to the men of the Brigade of Guards, and that we may expect a marked deterioration in both. As for the officers already serving in the Guards, I feel convinced that if this measure can be shown, as I believe it can, to be desirable in the interests of the Army as a whole, they will cheerfully submit to the sacrifice—[*cheers*]—if, indeed, it be one which they are required to make; and I readily admit that if they look askance at our proposal it is for no selfish reason, but because they honestly believe it to be detrimental to the efficiency and smartness of the brigade in which they take a just and pardonable pride. [*Cheers.*] We confidently look for their loyal and unhesitating assistance in securing the success of a measure intended to benefit the Queen's Army as a whole. With regard to the statement that this new liability will deter officers of the class who now serve in the brigade from joining it, I must confess that I am profoundly incredulous. We have heard such gloomy anticipations before. I recollect that, when open competition for commissions in the Army was first introduced, we were assured that the whole race of British officers would rapidly and disastrously deteriorate. We all know that nothing of the kind happened. If comparison is to be made, the present generation of officers has nothing to fear from it. I am convinced that the young men who join the Guards are animated by the same pride in their profession as the officers of other branches of the Army. Here and there we may find some gilded youth whose affection for the society or for the sports of his own country will be such that he may be unable to screw his courage up to join the brigade owing to the prospect of a banishment of a few months in the Mediterranean, but I am confident that in the long run, in spite of these gloomy forebodings, the Guards will continue to get the same sort of officers as they have obtained up to the present time. I ascribe greater weight to the arguments which are used with regard to the possible result of the change on the men of the brigade. I know that some high authorities hold that the prospect of service out of England may increase the difficulty of obtaining recruits of the proper stamp. On the other hand we have some grounds for thinking that the prospect of a little foreign service may prove even an attraction to many of the class from which the Guards are recruited. Time only can show which of these views is correct. Let me, however, say unhesitatingly that we should not propose this step if we believed that it would result in a permanent lowering of the standard of the height or the general physique of the Guards. The standard of height has been of late higher than it has ever been. We have had to raise it on account of the large number of recruits presenting themselves for engagement. The standard has always fluctuated, and must always fluctuate, according to the state of the labour market, but we believe that we shall be able to procure the additional number of recruits which will be required without lowering it below the normal level. I am strengthened in my hope that this result may not follow by the knowledge that the step we propose to take was recommended by the Committee of which Lord Wantage, himself a Guardsman, was chairman; while among its members were General Sir E. Bulwer and General W. Fielding (also a Guardsman), of whom the former had held, and the latter actually held at the time when the report was signed, the responsible office of Inspector-General of Recruiting. Then there is the argument that the foreign battalions will have their efficiency and smartness seriously impaired by a prolonged stay in a Mediterranean fortress. It is true that troops stationed at a place like Gibraltar must be at some disadvantage in respect of training and of practice in field firing, and that is no doubt a strong argument against keeping a battalion there for any length of time. We shall bear this point, the importance of which I fully recognise, carefully in mind. Another objection which has been freely urged is this. I have heard it said that our proposals will result in this depletion of the home battalions of the Guards in order to keep up the battalions which will be stationed in the Mediterranean. It is apprehended that the home battalions of the Guards will find themselves in the same position as the home batta- of the Line, which are subjected to a heavy and constant drain for the purpose of supplying the necessary drafts to their linked battalions abroad, and which consequently contain a very large proportion of young soldiers, and are, without their Reservists, unfit to take the field. I hope it will be understood that the case of the Guards and the Line is by no means the same. In the case of the Line the length of the foreign tour is 16 years, and during that time the home battalion is constantly pouring its best men into the foreign battalion at the rate of from 150 to 200 a year. The foreign tour of the Guards will, as I have already said, be short, and the burden, which in the case of the Line falls upon a single home battalion, will, in the case of the Guards, be divided between the two home battalions. [" Hear, hear ! "] What will be the extent of this burden? I think we may say confidently that it will not be unduly heavy, or of a kind likely to impair the efficiency of the home battalions. I wish, however, to state as distinctly as I can that, while I fully understand the objection which one battalion of a regiment may feel to undergoing wholesale depletion for the sake of another, I cannot for a moment admit that in no circumstances, even when the exigencies of the service require it, are two battalions of the same regiment to help one another by a mutual exchange of men. I do not regard an exchange of that kind as a depletion in the proper sense of the word. It is strictly an exchange. Let me illustrate my meaning. When a Guards battalion is sent to the Mediterranean, it will always have to leave behind a certain number of men, who, either because they have lately joined, or because they are within a few months of the end of their time, are unable to go abroad. How are these men to be disposed of? Obviously, they must be taken over by the home battalions in exchange for other men who do not labour under the same disqualifications. The transaction is in the nature of an exchange, or it may be in some cases a loan ; but it is not one which can properly be described as a serious depletion of the home battalions. I will only say one word more before I leave this part of the subject, and it is this— that we do not take this step without previous consultation with those whom we had a right to regard as able to advise us with the highest authority as to the effects of the measure upon the efficiency of the brigade. Their opinion—I am, of course, not speaking of matters of detail—gave us the strongest encouragement to believe that our scheme was in principle a sound one. Before leaving this subject I desire most emphatically to state that nothing can be further from our intention than to do anything which will permanently affect the traditional characteristics of the Brigade of Guards. [" Hear, hear ! "] We desire on the contrary, to maintain their status and efficiency. I need not repeat that we do not believe that the steps we contemplate will have the injurious effects attributed to them ; but the House may rest assured that we shall watch carefully and narrowly the results of these changes, and if the result should be other than what we expect, we shall most certainly consider ourselves bound to reconsider the position. [" Hear, hear !"] I will now leave the Guards, and mention another point at which it seems to us that an increase in the present establishment of the Army is called for. The House is aware that there are at this moment altogether 141 battalions of infantry, which give us 70 pairs of linked battalions and one odd battalion. The regiment which occupies this singular position is the Cameron Highlanders, which is the only one-battalion regiment in the Service. When it is out of the country it has no home battalion to support it. When, on the other hand, the battalion is at home, it has no battalion abroad to feed. We therefore propose to add a second battalion to this regiment, and therefore to increase by one the line battalions of the Army. The House will observe that the effect of these changes in regard to infantry will be that, whereas we have now 76 line battalions abroad to 65 at home, we shall have 73 abroad to 69 at home. That still leaves a deficit of four battalions; but that deficit, we think, may be fairly attributed in a measure to temporary circumstances, and we do not intend to provide for it at present by permanent measures. I wish now to say a few words on another subject. Our attention has very emphatically been called by the Standing Committee, which has for some years past advised the Government with regard to the strength of our colonial garrisons, to what the Committee regard as the weakness of some of the garrisons of the fortresses and coaling stations which we hold for the Navy. Their opinion is shared by our military advisers, and we have been recommended to make a slight addition to the strength of those garrisons. We propose a small increase at one or two stations in the infantry of the Line. We propose to add another battalion to the West India Regiment—a body of troops which have done most admirable service for the Empire under very trying conditions of climate; also another battalion of Malta Militia. But the deficiency is mainly in garrison artillery, and in order to carry out the views of the Committee, we propose to add to the strength of this branch of the artillery 3,600 men. I will not, on this occasion, enter at any length into the reasons upon which the Committee has based its recommendation. I can indicate them in general terms. There are certain points at which we have, from various causes which the House will scarcely expect me to discuss, become more vulnerable than of old. Then there is the fact that, in many of our defended ports, the conditions of defence have been altogether changed, owing to recent improvements in the science of artillery. The adoption of a new system of fire control and position finding, and the introduction of guns of an entirely new type, particularly quick-firing guns, which appear destined to play so large a part in future warfare, have rendered it necessary that we should reconsider the strength of the forces engaged in holding and defending these places. There is another point to which much attention has been paid by the Committee and by her Majesty's Government—I mean the undesirability of imposing upon the Navy, on a sudden outbreak of war, the duty of conveying reinforcements to our coaling stations and naval bases. It is this which leads us to the conclusion that the garrison of these places should be kept at their full strength in time of peace. I should like to say one word as to the policy by which we are guided in this matter. This point has been much controverted. I observe that there are two extreme schools of thought. There is the view of those who insist on the necessity of our maintaining the absolute supremacy of the sea, and who believe that, if our fleets are sufficiently strong for that we need take little or no thought for the land defences of the Empire at home or abroad. There is, on the other hand, the view of those who, in their anxiety that land defence should be properly provided for, seem to leave almost out of account the part which the fleet should take in warding off a naval attack upon our possessions. We cannot entirely accept either of these extreme views. I think it is clear that it is not part of our duty to increase the defences of these places up to a point sufficient to resist an attack from a large hostile squadron carrying with it a considerable expeditionary force; against such an attack it is the business of the fleet to protect them. If the fleet is not there, it is, presumably, because it is already watching or engaging the enemy's fleet elsewhere. The enemy's fleet, however, could not be at one and the same time watching or engaging our fleet and delivering an attack in force upon one of our coaling stations. On the other hand, there is no reason for ignoring altogether the question of land defence. The highest naval authorities hold, and no doubt rightly, that, our first object being to keep or to obtain the command of the sea, all other things must be subordinated to that object, and our admirals left free to use their forces as they find best for the purpose. Since this is the case, our coaling stations and colonial fortresses should be able to stand alone against any attack which is likely to be directed against them during the temporary absence of the fleet. I venture to sum up in the following propositions what appear to me to be the principles by which we should be guided. Let us maintain, above all things, our supremacy at sea. Let us next insist upon the mobility of our fleets, and impose upon them no duty which might restrict the freedom of their movements. Let us recognise that during their absence our coaling-stations will be exposed to what is commonly called a "cruiser attack" from the enemy. Let us, therefore, give them defences sufficient to insure their safety against any such attack. I must not forget to add one word with regard to field artillery. We propose to increase that arm by one new battery. We shall then have 45 batteries, or the full complement for the three army corps which we have been authorised to provide for home defence. I may sum up the increases which I have endeavoured to lay before the House. They consist of two new battalions of the Guards, one battalion of Cameron Highlanders, one battalion fo West Indian troops, one battalion of Malta militia, 3,600 garrison artillery, and one battery of field artillery. It only remains for me to say that we do not propose that these increases should be carried out in their entirety at once. Your Lordships must be well aware of the objections to sudden alterations in the establishment of the Army. Sudden increases are not only costly, but most detrimental to recruiting. A sudden influx of recruits at one moment is followed by a sudden efflux at another, and thereby we depart from the sound maxim laid down by Lord Wantage's Committee, that we should endeavour to maintain a constant and regular flow of recruits into the Army. We propose that the increases should be carried out during a period of three years. I have now stated what the proposals of the Government are, and I can only commend them to your Lordships' best consideration. [*Cheers.*]

LORD WANTAGE said he desired to take the earliest opportunity available to him in the Debate to say that the proposal to increase the strength of the Infantry of the Line, and the proposal to add to the strength of the Brigade of Guards, commended itself to his judgment. He wished specially to say a few words with regard to the latter proposal. He would go so far as to congratulate the Guards upon the proposed augmentation of their battalions, which showed the high value in which they were held. The privileges of the Guards had been from time to time greatly curtailed—indeed, he might say that they had, with one exception, entirely disappeared. But, although those privileges had been withdrawn, the efficiency of the Guards remained as great now as it ever had been in the past. The double rank, formerly borne by the officers of the Guards, and which was conferred upon them by a grateful country and an admiring Sovereign for distinguished services in great and victorious battles, had now been abolished, and the Guards and the Line, so far as officers' rank was concerned, were now on a precisely similar footing. But, although the Guards had no privileges of that nature over and above the Line, yet the duties of each branch of the Service and their establishments differed widely, because they were called upon to fulfil different functions. The duties of home battalions of the Line—and he referred specially to the duties of the officers and non-commissioned officers—were most onerous, and he would even say they were thankless. They were constantly engaged in the self-denying process of sending out heavy drafts of their best men to maintain the strength of their link battalions in India and elsewhere, and, although he had never heard an officer commanding a home battalion complain publicly of this self-denying and somewhat thankless task, he had often heard them in private lament the necessity of a process which left them in many cases little better than commanders of depôts of Recruits. The Secretary of State for War had referred in his excellent Speech to the case of India. England had deliberately put aside all proposals which had been made for the establishment of two separate armies—one to be Her Majesty's Army in India, complete in itself, with its training and recruiting establishments in England—and the other, Her Majesty's Army for Home and Colonial Service. Although this scheme had the sanction of many thoughtful persons, and had many obvious advantages attending it, yet he was convinced that its adoption would be by no means for the benefit of Her Majesty's Service generally. But the country, having elected to have one Army only for service—both in India and at home—must be prepared to accept the drawbacks and difficulties thereby entailed. The first and most obvious of these was that the linked battalions at home were merely nurseries for the battalions in India, and as such, quite unfit—as had been stated in evidence by the leading soldiers of the day—to undertake any fighting duties without being strengthened by men called up from the Reserve. Since Cardwell's scheme, framed in 1872, the Army in India had been from time to time permanently increased, and Egypt had been occupied and garrisoned by English troops, without any augmentation of the cadres at home. In this way the machinery which was intended to provide that every battalion abroad should have a corresponding linked battalion at home as a feeder, had been dislocated, and the utmost difficulty had been experienced in providing the accessory drafts which have to be sent out to keep up the Indian Establishment. The difficulty respecting drafts to India became most pressing in 1892, when Mr. Stanhope appointed a committee to propose remedies. At that time there were, and he believed at the present time there were 11 battalions abroad which ought properly to be at home. India was a hard mistress, and demanded her drafts to be regularly supplied, although the battalions at home might be quite unable to furnish them. Now the present proposal to send three battalions of Guards to the Mediterranean would greatly relieve the existing difficulty, and this plan was proposed in 1892, amongst other things, by the Wantage Committee. It would relieve the difficulty, because three battalions of the Line will be brought home, and will take their place in the proper position allotted to them. He would endeavour to explain in what manner a further advantage will be obtained. The three battalions of the Line that come home from the Mediterranean would then become *feeding* battalions, if he might use such an expression, instead of *absorbing* battalions—battalions requiring to be kept up by drafts from England, thus counting, to use a Parliamentary phrase, six in a Division. They had, therefore, the increase of two battalions of the Guards on the one side, against six battalions of the Line on the other—the financial balance in favour of the Guards scheme over the Line scheme showing a saving of £197,000 a year. The numbers of troops who were, from various causes, tied to the Militia, the Volunteers and the Yeomanry—home defence—as compared with those who were mobile, and available for immediate and active service abroad, were quite out of proportion; they had an abundance of the one and not enough of the other. That state of things required effective dealing with, and the proposal to add to the Guards was an important and decided step in that direction, and should, as such, be welcomed. The duties of the Guards, as he had already indicated, were fundamentally different from those of the Line. The former were relieved from all obligations of maintaining linked battalions abroad. The disastrous process of an annual depletion of their best men was spared them, and the consequence was, that the seven battalions of the Guards were the finest that could possibly be seen, fit, alone among Her Majesty's troops to go anywhere at the shortest possible notice. Lord Wolseley, speaking before the Wantage Committee of the young Line battalions not being fit for service, said:—

> "But I make one great exception, and that is in the case of the Guards. I think it is almost a necessary corollary to any short service system for our Army to have, say, nine battalions of the best troops always ready to do what you like with. The Guards are as well fitted for work now as I can ever remember, but there are only seven battalions of them. But I do not think it is possible to have in any army of the world a finer body of men."

He goes on to say he attaches the greatest importance to having battalions of specially superior troops for emergency. He says:—

> "I have long urged the advisability of adding two battalions more to the Guards, making three battalions for each regiment, by which means we should always have nine battalions of the finest troops possible to do anything with on a sudden emergency."

Having shown the superiority of the regiments of Guards over all other battalions of the Army at home, the course to be adopted seemed plain. The Commander-in-Chief, having obtained the sanction of Government for increasing the Army, naturally desired to select for augmentation those troops that most completely fulfilled the requirements for which they were needed. He therefore proposed to add to the Guards first, because they were the best troops we possessed; secondly, because they were the most mobile, and, therefore, most suited for immediate emergency, and he proposed to place one brigade of this augmented force at the entrance of the Mediterranean, as the spot where they would be more readily available. One great blot on our existing army system was that, with all our expenditure we could not, without having recourse to the Reserve, send out any number of Corps on a sudden emergency, the one exception being the battalions of the Brigade of Guards. While speaking of the Reserve, he should like to be allowed to quote from the Report of the Committee that went by the name of the "Wantage Committee." What were the functions of a Reserve? They were—

> "First, to raise units from peace to War establishment. Secondly, to take the place in the ranks of those men who being recruits are not fully grown. Thirdly, to replace in the ranks those men who are found to have become medically unfit for service in the field. Fourthly, after fulfilling the above requirements, to retain sufficient men in reserve in the second line, to fill up casualties occurring at the front, until such time as the recruits left behind are themselves ready to take their places in the fighting line."

The reserve was obviously never intended to be transferred at once into the fighting Line at the commencement of hostilities, which would be a necessity in the present condition of the home battalions of the Line. Having proved the special advantages attending an augmentation of the Brigade of Guards, they must, in his opinion, also accept that which followed, namely, the necessity and desirability of quartering a portion of the brigade away from the immediate proximity of the Sovereign. There was neither place nor requirement for additional battalions of Guards either at Windsor, London, or Aldershot. The privilege of the Guards to be the special guard of the Sovereign should, he thought, be interpreted in the broad sense of including not only Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, but also the State. This, he thought was established by the circumstance that when war broke out, the first troops ordered on service were invariably Her Majesty's Guards. But it was undoubtedly the privilege of the Guards, when at home, to be usually quartered in London or at Windsor, as the case might be. However much this privilege might be valued, and it was quite right it should be valued, it was not this in itself that had given the Guards their pre-eminence amongst other regiments. That the Guards had been enabled to inscribe on their colours the record of almost every great battle in which England had been engaged was due to the fact that they had always been on the spot, ready and prepared for action. In sending a portion of the Guards to Gibraltar, they would be practically or even more on the spot, in case of war, than they would be if quartered in England. Some minor objections had been raised to sending the Guards to Gibraltar, such as the want of rifle ranges and deficiency of drill ground; but if these existed—which he doubted very much—they applied equally to the Line, and ought in any case to be surmounted without loss of time. The proposal, therefore, which was now being discussed amounted to this, that the Government, amongst other things, proposed to augment the Guards from seven to nine battalions on the ground that they were the best troops we possessed, the best suited to their purpose, because their augmentation remedied the defects in the Cardwell scheme. He could not doubt, from his knowledge of the Guards, that when this proposal was shown to be for the advantage of the Army and the country, that a complete and cordial acceptance of the change would be accorded to it. He apologised to their Lordships for having dwelt on a portion only of this somewhat large question. But arguments which had occurred to him had been already made use of in the clear and admirable statement of the Secretary of State for War, which he was thereby relieved from alluding to. He saw in his place the noble Lord (Lord Methuen) who commanded the Brigade of Guards. No one was better fitted than he to speak on this subject, and he hoped he might not be unwilling to address their Lordships. There was one point on which he was sure the noble Lord would be at one with him, namely, in appealing to the Secretary of State for War to safeguard effectually the Brigade of Guards from being rendered less efficient than they now were by any undue depletion for the purpose of maintaining in full force the battalions serving abroad. [*Cheers.*]

LORD METHUEN said he need not apologise for addressing their Lordships on the present occasion, because his position as Commander of the Brigade of Guards gave him, he might say, the right to give his views on this matter. When the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief were good enough to ask him his opinion, he answered that, whatever feelings he had as Commander were subservient to those which affected the interests and the welfare of Her Majesty's Army. [*Cheers.*] They could, however, sympathise with him, and with those officers of the Guards who had devoted their lives to maintaining the Guards in the state of efficiency in which they had been left by their predecessors, in regard to the anxiety which they felt. When they read the evidence of the present Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, and the late Commander-in-Chief regarding the efficiency of the seven battalions of the Guards and the attenuated state of the Line, surely they might have some feelng of anxiety with regard to the Measure now before their Lordships. In olden days the Line were told very clearly that nothing was to be done that would do them harm, and he would ask them whether the home army now was in the same condition as it was. But he had no wish to dwell on the efficiency or non-efficiency of the Army. He only wished that those officers and civilians who had been so liberal in their opinions, both verbal and in writing, had made themselves masters of the evidence given before Lord Wantage's Committee. Unless they had studied that mine of military information, he did not think their opinion could be of any great value. He recognised the kind feeling which the Secretary of State had shown, both when he had consulted him and in the speech which he had now made. Any scheme for the increase of the Army, if it was to be followed by any decrease in the efficiency of the Brigade of Guards, would be evil and not good. He did not for one moment say that the measures proposed were not likely to be advantageous to the Brigade of Guards. He held the opinion, and had received it also from others, that it would be distinctly to the advantage of the Brigade of Guards if they could send six battalions into the field, and they would also have a better chance of seeing service. But that advantage, he had always said, should not be obtained at the expense of efficiency. There were three dangers which occurred to them, and he spoke not merely for himself but also for the three commanding officers of regiments who had given him their able and admirable advice. He should deprecate any scheme which had for its object the tearing out of the vitals of the six battalions of England in order to put life into those which were at Gibraltar. Any depletion of the battalions in England would be fatal to the Brigade of Guards. As to the training of these battalions at Gibraltar, if he was told that in one and a-half years three battalions could be as efficient, or very little less efficient, as they were when they went out, what was the good of all the teaching they had received when they were told that if they were to be equal to European nations in the exigencies of modern warfare, they should be exercised throughout the year in all the practical work which really formed a soldier? He was entirely in favour of having Gibraltar as a quarter for one year or a year and a-half, and he did not think that a battalion coming back at the end of a year and a-half, at any rate, dangerously inefficient. But, he urged, let them have six efficient battalions in England and one thoroughly efficient battalion in Gibraltar. There were three evils in Gibraltar which existed in a greater degree than they did in London; the first was drunkenness, the second disease, and the third heavy duty. The question of recruiting was one with which he had nothing to do, but he did hope that if any difficulty was found in getting recruits, and if the Brigade of Guards was in consequence losing it present fine physique, some steps might be taken to stop any deterioration. It was by no means clear that these difficulties could not be got over, but whilst helping the Secretary of State in every way he could to carry out this Measure, he felt that he should not be acting rightly, either to the Secretary of State or to the Brigade of Guards, for whose efficiency he was responsible, if he did not point out clearly, on behalf of himself and of the officers, past and present, the dangers and difficulties in the way. ["Hear, hear!"] The Brigade of Guards were a body of troops that at all times had gained the respect and admiration of the country; they had always done their duty when called upon, and he felt sure their services would not be forgotten. He wished to disabuse the Secretary of State of the idea that there was any feeling amongst the officers of the Brigade of Guards adverse to going abroad. There were no officers whom he knew who would not as willingly serve their country in India or elsewhere as in England if called upon. [*Cheers.*] The only danger he foresaw was the loss of efficiency.

*LORD MONKSWELL said he rose to ask the noble Marquess one or two questions with reference to the statement he had just made, and also with reference to the statement made in the House of Commons the other day by the Under Secretary. He was particularly gratified to hear the noble Marquess bestow such high praise on the policy of abolition of purchase. Everyone must agree that it was very desirable to make the system of linked battalions as effective as possible; but he was not quite certain that the proposals of the Government would have that effect, because it seemed even now that the number of battalions abroad would still be permanently four in excess of the number of battalions at home.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I said particularly that we did not regard the deficit as composed of battalions which would necessarily be permanently absent, and, therefore, we do not propose to provide for it by any permanent measures.

*LORD MONKSWELL: At any rate there would be a considerable deficit for the present, and it seemed to him that, with the forward frontier policy which was being pursued by the Government, it was exceedingly unlikely that the system of linked battalions would be absolutely effective, even after the increase the noble Marquess proposed. But he came to what was really a great difficulty in the way of the noble Marquess, and that was recruiting. A note of alarm was raised as to that matter in a letter in *The Times* of last Saturday. The statement in the letter was to the effect that the Brigade of Guards was now under its establishment, that trade was improving, and that the probability was that, if guardsmen were made liable in the future to garrison duty abroad, it would, to a great extent, put a stop to recruiting in the Brigade. That raised another question. He would like to ask the noble Marquess whether or not he considered that it would be a breach of faith to send the present rank and file, without their consent, to serve in Gibraltar; whether it was fair that men enlisted for three or seven years under the present system should be so called upon? There was another matter connected with recruiting. The noble Marquess proposed to increase the garrison artillery by 3,600. He was told that the artillery was now considerably under its establishment, and that there was the greatest possible difficulty in getting recruits; he therefore would like to know how the noble Marquess proposed to raise these additional men. Then with regard to the Cameronian Highlanders. He was told that there was also great difficulty in recruiting for that regiment, and that the regiment was at present not a Highland regiment at all, but was recruited largely from London and other places. There were one or two minor points in connection with the speech of the Under-Secretary. It was proposed, it seemed, to incur large expenditure in building and enlarging barracks; and with reference to that a note of warning as to the system at present pursued was raised in the House of Commons by Sir John Colomb, who suggested that the Royal Engineers were sometimes employed in connection with the construction of barracks, in duties for which their training did not qualify them. They were called upon sometimes to act as clerk of the works—a post for which, he was told, their training did not qualify them. He did not intend to say anything in disparagement of the corps. Every officer in the Engineers must be a highly-educated and cultivated man, but he ought not to be put to perform highly technical duties in which he had had no experience. Possibly the House might wish to have a little more information with regard to the proposed fortifications of London. The suggestion came from the late Mr. Stanhope, and the scheme was carried on by the late Government; but even if two Governments had combined in thinking it a right suggestion, he did not know that that was absolutely conclusive in its favour. Although the Under Secretary said that these fortifications had been approved by the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General, he did not say that they had been approved by the Inspector-General of Fortifications. He hoped the noble Marquess would tell the House whether that was so. Then the noble Marquess proposed to take a large area of land on Salisbury Plain for encampment and manœuvres. Sir John Colomb suggested in the House of Commons that it would be preferable to acquire lands on the coast, so that manœuvres might be carried out in conjunction with the naval forces.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: I would venture to point out that the matter which the noble Lord discussed towards the close of his speech would more appropriately be brought before the House when the Military Works Loan Bill, now before the House of Commons, comes here. The speech of the Under-Secretary was delivered in bringing in that Bill, and it seems to me that any criticism upon it might well be deferred until it arrives in your Lordships' House. ["Hear, hear!"] With regard to the defences of London, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say that we are not adopting any new plans for this purpose. We are merely carrying out certain works of a very modest order which were first initiated in the Government of which Mr. Stanhope was a member—works which were very fully explained in Parliament by Mr. Stanhope, which were carried on by the late Government, and which are being still further carried on by the present Government. I wished to make that observation because there seems to be in some quarters an impression that a new and startling departure has been made in this direction. With regard to Salisbury Plain, if the noble Lord will tell me in confidence of any area possessing advantages at all corresponding to those which Salisbury Plain offers, and which also has the advantage of being on the sea coast, and therefore suitable for combined naval and military operations, I shall be extremely obliged to him. [*Laughter.*] But my inquiries have not led me to expect the discovery of any such *terra incognita.* As to the other questions of the noble Lord, I do not consider there would be any breach of faith in employing Guardsmen in service in the Mediterranean. As the noble Lord himself knows, they all engage for general service, and are therefore already liable for service out of the United Kingdom. Then the noble Lord asked me a question with regard to our anticipations as to the possibility of obtaining a sufficient number of recruits for the garrison artillery. I have no reason to suppose that those recruits, who will be procured gradually during the next three years, will be impossible to obtain. The last question the noble Lord asked me had reference to the proposal to create a second battalion of Cameron Highlanders. I am free to confess that I am a little sceptical as to the Highland character of the men of whom that second battalion might possibly be composed; but I must tell the House that rumours have reached me that the men now serving in the existing battalion are not all of unimpeachably Scottish origin—in fact I have heard it said that not a few of them are enlisted at no great distance from the House in which your Lordships are sitting at this moment. [*Laughter.*]

House adjourned at a Quarter past
Six o'clock, till To-morrow at
a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 4th February 1897.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Second Reading upon Monday next.

QUESTIONS.

BALINTORE HARBOUR.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the engineers to the Fishery Board for Scotland failed during the construction of Balintore Harbour to require the removal of certain rocks, whereby fishing boats and other crafts are exposed to serious danger; and whether steps will be taken to secure the removal of these rocks at an early date?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): I am informed by the Fishery Board that the engineers who planned the harbour, and who were appointed by the harbour trustees, do not know to what rocks this Question can refer, as the excavations were finished in accordance with the plans and specifications in September 1893, with the exception of a few yards of rock outside the harbour entrance, which were removed in February 1895.

PORT NESS HARBOUR (ISLAND OF LEWIS).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is proposed to extend the harbour at Port Ness, Island of Lewis; and whether arrangements will be made to complete the works during the year?

*The LORD ADVOCATE: There is no intention to extend the harbour at Port Ness beyond what was proposed six years ago. As the hon. Member is aware, a dispute between the trustees and the contractors was referred to arbitration; and the decision has not yet been given to us. For the present it is impossible to say when the works will be finished.

CONTRACTS WITH FOREIGNERS.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he has succeeded in devising a better form for the annual return "Contracts with Foreigners," so as to inform the House not only what Government contracts have been placed with contractors outside the United Kingdom, but also what articles have been supplied from foreign countries by contractors or their agents resident in the United Kingdom?

*The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): The present annual return is undoubtedly misleading. In the case of articles purchased abroad through English firms, it has hitherto treated them as being of English origin or manufacture, though really purchased abroad. On the other hand articles purchased direct from abroad have not been included unless they are such as were also manufactured in this country. If any return is given, it ought to be accurate, and it is proposed to show *all* articles purchased from contractors outside the United Kingdom. In the case of articles obtained from English firms or agents, it would of course be very difficult, and almost impossible to trace the history of every component part, but with that proviso there would be no objection to a return showing all articles not *bonâ fide* manufactured in this country.

MIDWIVES' REGISTRATION.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government propose to take any action to carry out the Report of the Select Committee on Midwives' Registration (of 1893), which was of opinion that a large amount of suffering and death was needlessly inflicted on both women and children of the so-called working classes through the want of medical training amongst those practising as midwives?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): The Lord President of the Council informs me that the Association for promoting the compulsory registration of midwives intend to promote a Bill with this object during the present Session, and he has under consideration the question of receiving a deputation from the Association with regard to it.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the following complaint, contained in a letter from a well-known gentleman at Belfast, with respect to the rejection of deposits of odd pence by the Post Office Savings Bank: "To be a real poor man's bank, there should be given every facility to the working classes to save pence as well as shillings and pounds. The other day I was asked to deposit a sum for a poor man—one pound one shilling and tenpence. The tenpence was refused; no odd number of pence under twelve—one shilling—could be received"; whether he is aware that the calculations for interest on deposits usually come out in odd pence, and that high officials of the department have declared that the acceptance of odd pence with a shilling or more would impose no great additional labour on the clerks engaged; and, whether, with a view to encourage thrift, especially among children and the poorest classes of depositors, he will recommend the abolition of the rule forbidding the acceptance of odd pence over and above the minimum deposit of one shilling?

MR. HANBURY: The exclusion of odd pence from an amount of Savings Bank deposit is prescribed by the Savings Bank Act of 1861, and not by a mere Departmental rule. The Postmaster General's attention has not been called to the remark attributed to a well-known gentleman at Belfast. The calculation of interest—which is entered only once a year—does of course include odd pence, but this is in no way comparable to the inclusion of odd pence in all the numerous deposit entries throughout the year. The Postmaster General is not aware that any high officials have expressed the opinion that the acceptance of odd pence with a shilling or more would impose no great additional labour on the clerks engaged. He is on the contrary advised by the high officials that such a change as the hon. Member suggests would enormously increase the labour and cost of the Savings Bank transactions. The Postmaster General believes that the system of allowing penny stamps to be affixed to slips to make up deposits of a shilling—originally introduced by Mr. Fawcett—is all that is necessary, and he has no intention of recommending a change in the law.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could state the name of the "well-known gentleman" in Belfast?

MR. HANBURY said he could not give the name.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON said that as a matter of explanation he might state that the name of the gentleman referred to was Mr. John Ward, J.P., of Lennoxvale, Belfast. The original letter was sent to the Postmaster General.

PETERHEAD HARBOUR.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can explain why the available convict labour for the construction of the harbour at Peterhead is so much less than originally contemplated as to increase the estimated cost of the work by £160,000?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I am informed by the Prison Commissioners that in 1882, when the Peterhead Scheme was suggested, it was estimated that the working party of convicts which would be available would be 500, whereas at present the total available number is 235. The falling-off is due to a decrease in the annual average of sentences to penal servitude, and in their average duration.

MAIL BAG SEALS.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that every sealed mail bag sent from the Post Office can be easily opened without breaking the seal or cutting the twine, and rifled of its contents, which can then be replaced wholly or in part with the seal still intact; whether an easy method of doing this has been demonstrated to Mr. Braid, postmaster, Glasgow; whether Mr. Peter Dunsire, of Buckhaven, has brought under the notice of the Department a simple invention which would make it impossible to rob a mail bag without cutting it: whether this invention could be applied at very small cost to each mail bag; and, on what grounds the Department have declined to secure the safe transit of Her Majesty's mails by refusing to adopt Mr. Dunsire's invention, or allowing the trial of it which was sanctioned by Mr. Mahon, Surveyor of the Edinburgh Post Office?

MR. HANBURY: It is not the fact that every sealed mail bag can be easily opened without breaking the seal or cutting the string. Mr. Dunsire, who was at the time sub-postmaster of Methil, was permitted to experiment on a bag in the presence of the Postmaster of Glasgow, and succeeded in drawing the neck of the bag through the string, but bags are now so made as to render such a manipulation of the neck impossible if ordinary care is used in tying the string. Mr. Dunsire's invention, which is similar to many others submitted for the consideration of the Department, was thoroughly examined by practical officers, but it was not held to afford any greater security than the present method, while the cost would be much greater, and more time would be required for closing the bags. The present method of fastening bags with string and wax is simple and satisfactory, and there is no risk attendant thereon which Mr. Dunsire's invention would remove.

SWANSEA POST OFFICE.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is the fact that it is intended to erect new post office buildings in Wind Street, Swansea; whether the Postmaster General is aware that great dissatisfaction exists among the inhabitants of Swansea in regard to the plans of the proposed new buildings; and whether the Postmaster General will postpone any final decision as to the adoption of these plans until further opportunity has been given for laying before him the objections taken to them?

MR. HANBURY: It is a fact that it is intended to erect a new post office building in Wind Street, Swansea, at a cost of £47,000 for site and building. The plans have been shown to the Town Council, and the Postmaster General is not aware that great dissatisfaction exists among the inhabitants in regard to them. The Council, however, have suggested that the elevation should be of a more imposing character, and that the building itself should be set back on two sides. The Postmaster General is in communication with the First Commissioner of Works on these points, but he cannot hold out any hope that any addition will be authorised to the large expenditure of public money already authorised upon the building.

WATER SUPPLY (RURAL DISTRICTS).

SIR CAMERON GULL (Devon, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that, although statutory obligations are imposed upon rural district councils in respect of the supply of water to places within their district, it has been often found practically impossible for those councils to carry out their obligations in the absence of powers of compulsory purchase; and whether, having regard to the serious amount of sickness in country districts which is directly traceable to insufficient or impure water supply, he could introduce at an early date a short Measure enabling rural district councils to compulsorily acquire water rights?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I am advised that there have been cases where district councils have been placed at a disadvantage, and I have already caused the point to be noted as one of the matters which should be considered in connection with any Bill for the Amendment of the Public Health Acts; but for reasons already given on other matters I cannot undertake to bring in a Bill this Session.

SIR CAMERON GULL: Is there any immediate prospect of a Bill being introduced?

MR. CHAPLIN: No; I cannot say that.

CAVAN AND LEITRIM LIGHT RAILWAY.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.); I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the capitalisation of the shares of the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway has yet been effected so as to give the relief intended by the Act passed in 1895?

Mr. HANBURY: The hon. Member refers no doubt to the Government contribution, not to the shares. I have heard nothing more from the Company on the subject. Their August Report stated that:

> "Owing to the high price of the Company's stock it has been found impossible to adopt with advantage to the ratepayers and shareholders the provisions of the Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1895, for redemption of the Treasury contribution to the Counties in aid of Baronial Guarantee."

ROYAL CANAL HARBOUR (LONGFORD).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the many accidents which have occurred in the Royal Canal Harbour at Longford, resulting in the death of a great number of persons since it was first opened, he is prepared to give his assent to the introduction of a short Bill to enable Town Commissioners and other public bodies to enclose such dangerous places, which it appears they cannot at present legally do?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. C. T. Ritchie, Croydon): Until I have seen such a Measure as is referred to by the hon. Member, I am not able to say what my attitude will be in respect to it.

STORNOWAY MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the Stornoway mail, which is dispatched from London with the Wick mail at 8.30 p.m., is thrown out at Dingwall at 11.14 a.m., and there delayed until 11.55 a.m., when it is sent on by a train stopping at all stations, with the result that it does not arrive at Strome Ferry until 2.10 p.m., whence it is dispatched by steamer to Stornoway, reaching the latter place too late in the evening to admit the business community to reply by the return mail leaving one hour after midnight; and, whether he will take steps to accelerate the Stornoway mail service, which not only affects a population of 30,000 in the Island of Lewis, but also a considerable population on the western mainland of Ross-shire?

Mr. HANBURY: The Stornoway mail is conveyed in the manner stated in the hon. Member's question, and is due to reach Stornoway about 9 p.m. A delivery of letters to callers at the Post Office is afforded the same evening whenever the steamer arrives in time for such delivery to be made by 10.15 p.m., and on such occasions opportunity is given for reply to urgent letters by the outgoing mail of the same night. To accelerate the arrival of the mail at Stornoway, as desired by the hon. Member, would involve heavy expenditure to the Post Office, which the circumstances do not warrant. Moreover, the earlier arrival of the mail would benefit, not the whole population of Lewis, but only the inhabitants of Stornoway.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY (VENTILATION).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, if he will state whether the Departmental Committee to inquire into the ventilation of the underground railways of London has been appointed; and, if so, will he state the names of the Members of the Committee?

Mr. RITCHIE: The Committee was appointed on the 2nd of this month, and the names of the Members appeared in the newspapers yesterday morning. They are:—

Major Marindin, R.E., C.M.G. (Chairman).
Earl Russell.
Sir Douglas Galton, K.C.B.
Sir Charles Scotter.
Dr. John Scott Haldane.

METRIC SYSTEM.

Mr. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he proposes to introduce the Bill of last Session for the metric system of weights and measures?

Mr. RITCHIE: I am unable at present to fix a date, but I hope its introduction will not be unduly delayed.

MEDITERRANEAN GARRISON (BRIGADE OF GUARDS).

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, as reported, to add two battalions to the brigade of Guards, and to station certain battalions of the brigade in a Mediterranean garrison; and whether any other additions to the Army are contemplated?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): It will be gathered from the Estimates presented to Parliament that it is intended to add a battalion each to the Coldstream Guards and Scots Guards, and to station three battalions of the Guards in the Mediterranean. It is also proposed to add a battalion to the Cameron Highlanders, which is the only single-battalion regiment in the Army. It is further intended to raise an additional regiment of Malta Artillery and to add a battalion to the West India Regiment, while the Garrison Artillery will be increased by 3,400 men. One field battery to complete the equipment of three army corps will also be raised. The Estimates, with a memorandum from the Secretary of State fully explaining these increases, will be in the hands of Members to-morrow morning.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the employment of the Guards on foreign service in time of peace is intended to be exceptional, or whether it is intended to place them permanently on foreign service?

Mr. BRODRICK: This arrangement has been put forward by the military authorities as being the best and most economical scheme of meeting the needs of the Army. Its operation will require to be carefully watched, and should the effect on recruiting in the Guards be other than that which we are led to expect the whole position will be reconsidered. I need hardly say that we have no intention of doing anything to alter the historic character of the Guards. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked when there would be an opportunity of discussing the matter on the Army Estimates?

Mr. BRODRICK said the right hon. Gentleman must ask the First Lord of the Treasury that question.

*Mr. McLEOD (Sutherland) asked if the right hon. Gentleman could say where the Cameron Highlanders were to come from, seeing that the Government refused to introduce legislation to keep Highlanders in the country? [An Hon. Member; "Ireland."] [*Laughter.*]

Mr. BRODRICK: I hope they will come from the same source of recruiting as at present.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether there is any intention of establishing a battalion of Irish Guards?

Mr. BRODRICK: No, Sir. [*Irish ironical cheers.*]

PERSECUTION OF NESTORIANS.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have any recent information regarding the persecution of the Nestorian Christians inhabiting the higher mountain regions of Assyria above the banks of the Zab and Habor; whether they are now surrounded, with the help of the Kurds, and their caravans prevented from leaving the country to procure food; and whether they are in great danger of perishing from famine?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): The latest reports on the subject of the Nestorians received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van were dated December 20th and November 15th, and in neither of them did Major Williams seem to anticipate the state of things suggested in this Question. He spoke of the Kurds as a terror to Christians and Moslems alike, but he took a more hopeful view of the situation as affecting the Nestorians. The latter, although they had suffered from Kurdish raids, had on the whole, in his opinion, come comparatively well through the recent troubles; and their condition was a happy one contrasted with that of the Armenian peasantry. There was no idea of coercing them if they remained quiet, and he did not think there was any cause for alarm on the part of their friends. In October last, on hearing from the Archbishop of Canterbury's mission of an intention to disarm the Nestorians in the Tyari and Ashiret districts, inquiries were made, and Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Van telegraphed that there was no truth in the reports. I may add that if the hon. Member has any private information on the subject which he cares to communicate to me I shall be happy to receive it.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the new time table for an accelerated mail service between England and Ireland, it would be possible to send on all mails for Cavan, Belturbet, and Enniskillen from Dundalk immediately on the arrival of the limited mail there each morning instead of, as at present, delaying the train's departure till 9 o'clock and then only sending the mails on a slow train?

Mr. HANBURY: The question raised by the hon. Member shall be examined in connection with the revision of the daily mail service between Dublin and Belfast, but if the only way of effecting the improvement is by the establishment of additional trains at the cost of the Post Office, I fear it will not be practicable to meet the wishes of the inhabitants.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for Dublin, College Green (Mr. J. L. Carew), I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will see that provision is made in the new arrangement for the acceleration of the Irish mails for giving to passengers by the up and down day trains between London and Holyhead the same facilities for booking third class as are given at present to English and Scotch passengers by the same trains between London, Crewe, and Chester?

Mr. HANBURY: No, Sir; it must be left to the Railway Company to determine what classes of traffic they can carry by the mail trains consistently with the due performance of the mail service for which they contract with the Postmaster General. The wish of the Irish representatives that provisions should be made in the trains for third class passengers to and from Ireland is well known to the Railway Company, but they have hitherto stated that they cannot see their way to make such provision.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: When this train was first established it was specially for the conveyance of the passenger traffic to Ireland. Since then the Company began to use it for carrying English and Scotch passengers.

*Mr. SPEAKER: "Order, order!" The hon. Gentleman is replying upon the answer; he is not asking a question.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: With all respect, the right hon. Gentleman has not answered the question—whether the Postmaster General has not power to prevent the using of the trains for carrying English and Scotch passengers when the Company will not give facilities to Irish passengers?

Mr. HANBURY: What the Postmaster General has to consider is the carriage of the mails; he is not concerned with the passenger traffic at all.

ARMY PENSION (JOHN FITZPATRICK).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, if he can state the reasons which influenced the Paymaster General to stop the pension awarded to John Fitzpatrick, of Fartherin, Ballyconnell, county Cavan, and whether such action was in accordance with the regulations?

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): The pension of John Fitzpatrick, amounting to 6s. 5d. per week, was suspended by the

Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital during his imprisonment for contempt of Court, in not having paid a debt of 16s. 9d. on which judgment had been obtained against him two months previously. The Commissioners held that as he was able to pay the debt and had refused to do so, although ample time had been allowed, and that as his imprisonment involved his maintenance at the expense of the State, the case was one in which it was right for them to exercise the powers of temporary forfeiture conferred on them by Her Majesty's Warrant.

DIVISIONAL POLICE COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Monaghan (Mr. JAMES DALY), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many divisional commissioners of police there are in Ireland, and how much salary they receive; and, whether he can say if the reduction of the police force in Ireland will lessen the duties of the divisional commissioners; and, if so, whether he will reduce the salaries of the divisional commissioners accordingly?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): There are four divisional commissioners at present employed in Ireland, each in receipt of a salary of £1,000 per annum. The proposed reduction of the police force will not affect the duties or emoluments of these officers.

COTTAGE GARDENS.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board (1) whether it is the case that the provision in the Agricultural Rates Act admitting to any benefit of the Act, *inter alia,* cottage gardens exceeding one quarter of an acre, has been so affected by letters from the Inland Revenue, appearing to be based upon Article 5, Section 3, of the Local Government Board Order, as to exclude, in the parish of East Dean alone, hundreds of small freeholders from such benefit; (2) whether he is aware that Article 5, Section 3 (*c*), of the Order of the Local Government Board, by which it is directed that, in the case of premises consisting partly of agricultural land and partly of buildings, the minimum rateable value of the part consisting of the buildings shall be £3, has had the effect of excluding from the benefit of the Act all cottages with gardens of which the gross rateable value does not exceed £3; and (3) whether he will introduce such modifications into the Order that cottagers to whom the Act, by virtue of the definition section, expressly applies may not be excluded from its benefit?

MR. CHAPLIN: With respect to the first question, I am not aware of the facts mentioned as to the letters of the Board of Inland Revenue, and they are not within my knowledge. As regards the second question, I imagine that the cases of cottages with an area of land exceeding a quarter of an acre, where the rateable value of house and land would be less than £3, would be very exceptional, assuming that the hereditament is assessed at its proper rateable value. The case to which the right hon. Member refers is the only one that has been brought under my attention where it has been alleged that any hardship has occurred from the operation of the Order in this respect. Apart from any other consideration, no alteration of the Order of the Local Government Board could now affect this question. The several statements of value have been long since settled by the Assessment Committees, and the time for appeals has passed. The lists as settled will come into operation for all rates made after the 31st March next.

*SIR C. DILKE asked if the right hon. Gentleman would inquire as to the legality of the portion of the letter which professed to be based on the order of his Department, or should he address a question on the legality of the letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer?

MR. CHAPLIN was understood to answer in the affirmative.

INSANITY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for Glasgow, Tradeston, (Mr. A. C. CORBETT), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the fact that the number of insane persons under official cognisance in the United Kingdom, Ireland included, have increased from 55,525 in 1862 to 128,896 in 1895, and that the ratio of insane per 1,000 of the population has gone up during the same period from 1·81 to 3·28; and whether, in view of the importance of the subject, he will take steps to convene an International Conference to ascertain what measures can be taken to arrest the spread of the disease?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I am aware of the great increase in the number of insane persons in institutions, and I would remind the hon. Member that on Febuary 28 last year I stated in this House that I should consult with the Lord Chancellor with a view to the attention of the Lunacy Commissioners being specially directed to the question. The Lunacy Commissioners have, I am informed, completed a special report on the subject, which is now in the printer's hands; and until I have had the opportunity of considering that report I should prefer not to reply to the second part of the hon. Member's Question.

MR. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) asked whether the inquiry would include Ireland?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: No, Sir; it will not include Ireland, because there was a special inquiry in the matter in Ireland before.

ILLEGAL SUPPLY OF SEAMEN (GLASGOW).

MR. JOHN BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the case of John Anderson, boarding house keeper, Broomielaw, Glasgow, who was tried at Greenock on 16th December last for supplying to the British ship *King's County* six seamen, five of whom were his own boarders; whether Anderson pleaded in defence that he was told two years before by Mr. Ross, Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Glasgow, that if he only supplied men who were his own boarders, and charged no fee, he would not be interfered with, which statement was corroborated by Mr. Ross; whether with regard to the remaining seamen, it was proved that his own boarding house keeper had taken him down to Greenock; whether Anderson was convicted and fined £2 for each man; and whether, under the circumstances, he will advise that the fine be remitted?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I have made inquiry into this case. All the statements made in my hon. Friend's Question were made before and examined by the Sheriff, who convicted, but imposed a modified penalty. I see no reason to set aside his decision.

DISTRESS (WESTPORT UNION).

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called, by resolution of the Westport Board of Guardians, to the distress at present existing in the Louisburgh Division of the Westport Union, and to the need for establishing some remunerative relief works; and whether he would favourably consider the request of the Westport Board of Guardians, viz., to establish a line of railway between Westport and Louisburgh, which would have the effect of relieving the several congested districts between those two points, and of developing the fishing industry to the west of Louisburgh?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have received a copy of the resolution referred to. The condition and prospects of the poorer classes in this district have received and will continue to receive, the very careful attention of the Poor Law Authorities, but it is not anticipated that it will become necessary to supplement the resources of the poor law by the establishment of relief works. With regard to the suggested construction of a railway between Westport and Louisburgh, I cannot hold out any hope that the line will be included in the allocation of the Grant provided by the Act of last year.

MR. DANE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had received a report in reference to this district?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am continually receiving reports from all those districts.

DONEGAL PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to a report of the Donegal Petty Sessions, held on Wednesday the 20th ultimo, where Constable Patrick Wall, of the Mountcharles Police Station, charged Patrick Gallagher, of Mountcharles, with being drunk and disorderly, and on the case being investigated by the Magistrates (Mr. Gerald Butler, R.M., presiding) they dismissed it, and censured the constable; (2) is he aware that within the past three months this constable has brought several charges against publicans and others, which on investigation by the Donegal Bench were dismissed; and (3) whether the authorities intend to take any, and, if so, what action in reference to the conduct of this constable?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have been furnished with a report of the proceedings on the hearing of this case. Complaint having been made by the defendant as to the action of the constable, he was informed that he should take out a summons against the constable, on the charge of violation of duty under Section 19 of the 6 & 7 William IV., cap. 13, when the Magistrates in Petty Sessions could make a sworn inquiry into the case, and deal with it as provided for under the Statute. This step Mr. Gallagher proposes to take. The fact is not as stated in the second paragraph; of nine prosecutions brought by this constable during the past three months only two were dismissed.

MR. MACNEILL was understood to ask why, the Magistrates having censured this constable, the Constabulary authorities would not investigate his conduct with a view to some action?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that a remedy having been provided by law, the suggestion of the hon. Member had no force.

COLLECTION OF LICENCES.

MR. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the various licence duties which are now contributed in Great Britain to local taxation are collected by Imperial taxgatherers; and whether, as in Ireland, the licences are not devoted to local purposes, he is willing to give over the collection of these licences to the local authorities who now receive the proceeds, and so relieve the Imperial taxpayers generally and Ireland especially?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The licence duties which are now contributed in Great Britain to local taxation are collected by Imperial officers. This arrangement was part of the scheme under which the allocation of these licences to local taxation was made, and I see no reason at present for disturbing it. The transfer of the collection of licences to local officers would throw a considerable burden on the localities with a very small economy to the Imperial Exchequer. The assignment of local licences in Great Britain to local authorities was in lieu of certain grants in aid of local purposes which were discontinued. There has been no discontinuance of the corresponding Grants-in-aid in Ireland.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether instructions have been given to cease recruiting for the Royal Irish Constabulary, and to reduce the number of mounted men in that force; and, if so, will he explain what is the object of the Government in carrying out these economies?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have already explained that it is proposed to effect a reduction in the Royal Irish Constabulary by allowing the force to waste down, through retirements and the stoppage of recruiting, by 605 men, after which it will stand at 10,830 men. The mounted section of the force will be reduced by 106 men. As to the last part of the Question, I should have thought that the hon. Member would have been among the first to recognise that economy is an end in itself where it can be effected with a due regard to the public interests.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) how many head constables, sergeants, acting sergeants, and constables are at present serving in the Royal Irish Constabulary in Ireland who have completed their statutory time (29 years and over); and (2) whether their retirement will be directed in order to reduce the number of men at present serving in the force and lighten the burden of taxation?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Inspector General states that much time and labour would be required to procure the information sought for in the first part of the Question. The men referred to are not, either by reason of age or length of service, incapacitated for duty, but are fully trained and vigorous men capable of continuing to render efficient service, and it is not proposed compulsorily to retire men of this class. To retire effective policemen who are willing to continue in the service would not be a desirable way of reducing the force where the same end can be effectually secured by stopping recruiting.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (SCOTLAND).

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the nature of the provisions which have recently been made for the better protection of the fishing beds off the coast of Scotland from the depredations of trawlers within the three-mile limit?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: The arrangements are not yet definitely settled; I shall, however, take the earliest possible opportunity of supplying the information desired.

INEBRIATE

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the State Home for Habitual Inebriates which has been opened at Foxboro, Massachusetts, and if he can obtain information with regard to its conditions of management, &c.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: My attention has not previously been called to this Home, but I should be pleased if my hon. Friend would speak to me on the matter, as I should be very glad to try and get him any supplementary information which may be procurable.

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why the annual Report of Experiments on Living Animals is published later and later every year; and whether, having regard to the fact that the last Vivisection Report for the year 1895 was published on the 6th August 1896, when Parliamentary intervention that Session was impossible, he will give an assurance that the Report for 1896 will be published in time for discussion on the Estimates?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I explained, in answer to a Question of the hon. Member last August, why last year's return was issued so exceptionally late. Every effort will be made to issue the return in future at an early date.

MR. MACNEILL asked if the right hon. Gentleman would, as far as he could, give him an assurance that it would come on in time for discussion on the Estimates?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said that there were exceptional reasons last year in consequence of certain returns not coming in from the hon. Member's own country.

MR. MACNEILL: There is no vivisection in Ireland.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures were taken in respect to two men licensed to perform experiments on living animals during the year 1895, under the provisions of the 39 and 40 Vic., c. 76, who are stated in the report of the inspector, G. V. Poore, Esq., M.D., to have been guilty of irregularities as licensed vivisectors; what where the irregularities brought by the inspector in these cases under the notice of the Secretary of State; were any proceedings under the provisions of The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, taken against these persons or either of them; and, were the certificates granted to them by the Home Secretary for the purposes of vivisection revoked?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: The irregularities consisted, in the one case, in the licensee performing an operasion on a cat, without having the necessary certificate; in the other case, in the licensee performing two experiments necessitating a certificate, which he had omitted to renew. In the first case, the licence was revoked and not regranted until after an interval of three months and a half, and steps were taken to prevent a recurrence of the irregularity.

In the second case, the consideration of the application for a renewal of the licence was deferred for a month. In neither case was it thought desirable to take further proceedings.

MR. MACNEILL asked if it would not be competent for the right hon. Gentleman to institute prosecutions against both these men, who had been guilty of diabolical cruelty?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said he could not admit the diabolical cruelty; but, according to the best information that he had got upon these two cases, which occurred before he came into office—though in saying that he did not desire to make the least reflection upon his predecessor—there was, he thought, a great difference between them, a difference which was marked by the action of the Home Office. If there appeared any necessity whatever for putting in operation any other processes of the law for cruelty to animals, he could assure the hon. Member he would do so.

MR. MACNEILL: May I ask whether, as a matter of fact, both these men have at present licences for vivisection?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order order! The Question has been fully answered.

WIMBLEDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

MR. J. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the public elementary schools at Wimbledon are overcrowded, the teaching staff insufficient, and the accommodation deficient; that children who cannot be received in the schools have to go to those at Merton and to pay fees, and the children in the Cottenham Park district have to walk a mile and a half; and whether, seeing that a final notice under Section 9 of the Act of 1870 was issued to the school district of Wimbledon calling for the supply of about 740 school places, which notice expired on the 30th November last, will he state what steps the Department has taken since then to give effect to Section 10 of the Act?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): There is a considerable deficiency of school accommodation in the Wimbledon school district. This is now being supplied with due dispatch.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

MR. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a Resolution of the Dublin Corporation passed on 14th December 1896, protesting against the present system of Irish Private Bill legislation at Westminster; has the Government considered the question raised in that resolution; and can he inform the House whether it is proposed this Session to deal with the subject of Irish Private Bill legislation, in accordance with the assurance given by him to the Dublin Chamber of Commerce on 4th December 1896?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Resolution referred to has been received. With regard to the remainder of the Question, I cannot add anything to the statement in Her Majesty's Speech at the opening of the present Session of Parliament. No assurance was given by me that the subject would be dealt with during the present Session.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION EXAMS. (IRELAND).

MR. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he is aware that at the intermediate education examinations (Ireland) of 1896 the marking in English (boys middle grade) was unusually severe, 48 per cent. of the candidates being adjudged to have failed, some of whom would have gained exhibitions but for this, and that this result has been widely protested against by teachers; (2) if any reason can be assigned for such raising of the standard required, without previous notice, for some only of the students, and in a subject indispensable to passing the examination generally; and (3) if any steps are being taken by the Commissioners to prevent a recurrence of such results?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed by the Assistant Commissioners of Intermediate Education that it is the case that about 47 per cent. of boys of the prescribed age in the middle grade failed to pass in English in 1896, and that some students who failed in English would have retained exhibitions were it not for such failure. Representations on the subject from teachers were received and considered by the Board. As regards the second paragraph, the conditions of passing in the subject, English, were the same in 1896 as in the previous year. The question of the examination in English generally, and in English composition in particular, is engaging the attention of the Board.

LAND COMMISSION OFFICE, DUBLIN.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the rules which now govern appointments to the clerkships in the Land Commission Office, Dublin; whether the Chief Commissioner still, as formerly, exercises the power of nomination; and, if not, is an examination necessary; where and how often is such examination held, and by whom; and, when does the next examination take place?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Vacancies in the clerical staff of the Land Commission are filled by open competitive examination held under regulations which may be obtained on application to the Civil Service Commissioners. The Land Commissioners do not nominate, as formerly, the examination being open to all natural-born subjects of Her Majesty who are of the prescribed age. Examinations are held by the Civil Service Commissioners whenever it is necessary to fill vacancies, and after public notification of the intention to hold an examination has been given.

SMALL-POX EPIDEMIC (GLOUCESTER).

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if Her Majesty's Local Government Board Inspector has yet reported on the recent small-pox epidemic at Gloucester, and on the sanitary condition of the city at the time; and, if so, whether he will lay the Report upon the Table of the House?

Mr. CHAPLIN: In view of the fact that the Royal Commission on Vaccination had sent a Special Commissioner to report on the epidemic of small-pox at Gloucester, the Local Government Board did not deem it expedient to instruct an inspector to make a Report on the same subject.

Mr. BAYLEY: The Local Government Board did send an inspector, I believe, is that not the fact?

Mr. CHAPLIN: Yes, an inspector was sent at the time when the epidemic was at its worst, to assist in putting an end to the then state of things, but he was not instructed to make a Report on the general question, inasmuch as a special Commissioner was charged with the duty.

Mr. BAYLEY: Has he made a Report?

Mr. CHAPLIN: I have not yet seen the Report, though I believe it has been printed.

NAVAL OUTFIT.

Mr. HUDSON KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he has recently received representations from manufacturers, traders and workmen of the Three Towns and elsewhere as to the serious loss of trade and employment, that will be occasioned in consequence of the order lately issued at Devonport, prohibiting chief petty officers and other ratings of the Navy from purchasing their naval outfit from local outfitters as has been customary for so long a time; and whether, in view of these representations, he is prepared to withdraw the order?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. W. G. E. Macartney, Antrim, S.): Representations have been received as stated in the Question. The order is applicable not only to Devonport but to all naval ports, and directs that, in future, men upon first joining the navy are to obtain their outfit from the local government contractors; afterwards they may go where they please for their clothes. It is not proposed to withdraw the order which has been determined upon in the interests of the Service and the men, nor can I admit the assumption in the first paragraph of the Question.

NATIONAL GALLERY AND BRITISH MUSEUM (SUNDAYS).

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that the National Gallery and the British Museum are now closed to the public on Sundays; and, whether he will consider the desirability of recommending the Trustees to give effect to the Resolution adopted by the House of Commons on the 10th March 1896 at all seasons of the year?

MR. HANBURY: The hon. and gallant Member's information differs from mine, as I understand that the British Museum is open on Sundays all the year round. The hon. Member who moved the Resolution of March 10th 1896 has represented to the Treasury that to keep these institutions open only till dusk in winter is practically useless, as the working classes cannot well reach them till about half-past three. In the absence of any system of artificial lighting it would be useless to keep a picture exhibition like the National Gallery open for any sufficient time after that hour during any but the summer months. The hon. and gallant Member must not forget that any extension of the present arrangements would increase a charge upon the taxpayer which in provincial towns would be borne by the ratepayer. London is, therefore, already better off than the provinces in this respect.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that both the British Museum and the National Gallery were closed on Sunday last?

MR. HANBURY: I am informed it was open.

BOSCOMBE POST OFFICE.

MR. A. H. SMITH (Christchurch): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what steps are being taken with a view of improving the post office accommodation at Boscombe; and, whether the Postmaster General will consent to the establishment of a new head office at Boscombe, independent of that at Bournemouth?

MR. HANBURY: The question of improving the accommodation at the Boscombe sub post office is now under consideration; and it is hoped that arrangements may shortly be made under which the whole ground floor of the present premises, part of which is now used as a shop, may be devoted to post office business. The circumstances would not justify the raising of Boscombe to the rank of a head office; nor, if such an arrangement could be made, would any improvement of service result from the change.

POSTAL FACILITIES (RUSHDEN).

MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the memorial from Rushden, presented last Michaelmas, and complaining that that town, with 10,000 inhabitants and considerable and rapidly-increasing commercial interests, still has all its postal arrangements carried on through the adjacent and smaller town of Higham Ferrers, involving great loss of time and restriction of postal facilities, has been considered; and whether steps will be forthwith taken to give to Rushden independent postal arrangements?

MR. HANBURY: The necessary inquiries on the subject of the memorial from residents at Rushden have not yet been completed, but the matter is receiving attention, and as soon as the Postmaster General is able to arrive at a decision, the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

MR. CHANNING: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the memorial was laid before the Postmaster General last September, and in view of the fact that five months have elapsed, can he give an assurance that a decision will be arrived at in a short time?

MR. HANBURY: I was not aware the memorial was presented so long ago. If the hon. Member will put down another question, I will get information.

CUSTOMS OUTDOOR OFFICERS (IRELAND).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say why the usual examinations for candidates for Customs outdoor officers have not been held in Ireland since October 1894; and when it is proposed to hold an examination?

Mr. HANBURY: Examinations for the post of Outdoor Officer have ceased because the post no longer exists, and intending candidates who apply to the Board of Customs are informed that—

> "The situation of Outdoor Officer in the Customs service will in future be styled Assistant of Customs, with an improved rate of salary. Owing to the number of redundant officers, no appointments to the new grade will be offered for competition for three or four years to come.
>
> "The limits of age for the first competition will be 19 and 25, but they may be altered after it has taken place."

It is still not probable that all the qualified redundant outdoor officers now in the Service will become absorbed into the new grade in a period of less than three years from the present date.

ALIENS EXPULSION ACT.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the statement is correct that two Englishmen, named Edward Jessop and Thomas Body, were recently arrested and deported by the Boer authorities under the Aliens Expulsion Act, and treated with such harshness that one died and the other attempted suicide; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): I have seen a paragraph in the *Cape Times*, which is founded on one in the *Natal Witness*, making the statement referred to. I have telegraphed for information on the subject.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

Mr. ALFRED HUTTON (York, W.R., Morley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether it is a fact that a number of school buildings erected by the aid of building grants from public funds have ceased to be used as public elementary schools; and, if so, how many; whether the terms upon which the building grants were made are being observed; and whether an inquiry can be made into all cases of such school buildings?

Sir J. GORST: The Committee of Council has no information on the matters referred to in the first and second paragraphs. If any specific cases can be brought before the Committee of Council, inquiry shall be made.

WEAK-MINDED AND IMBECILE CHILDREN.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, how it is proposed to distinguish between the weak-minded children who are to be intrusted to the care of the new Board which is intended to be established in London and the imbecile children at present under the charge of the Metropolitan Asylums Board in their school at Darenth?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The children who are sent to Darenth are children in respect of whom the medical officer of the district or workhouse from which they are sent has certified that they are in his opinion chronic and harmless lunatics, idiots, or imbeciles. The distinction in this case would be that children who are of weak or feeble intellect, but are not certified to be imbeciles or idiots, would be subject to the new order.

REFORM PRISONERS (PRETORIA).

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether correspondence has passed between himself and the two imprisoned reform leaders still in Pretoria Gaol; and, if so, whether he will lay that correspondence upon the Table of the House?

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has placed himself in direct communication, through the British Agent at Pretoria, with the two British subjects detained there as political prisoners; whether he has ascertained that these two gentlemen refused to make an appeal for pardon to President Kruger because they believed they were promised when they laid down their arms that the Imperial Government would protect them from harm; whether he has informed them that the Imperial Government repudiates any responsibility on their behalf, and regards their surrender as unconditional; and whether he can state the substance of any correspondence that has passed on the subject?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will lay the correspondence mentioned by the hon. Member on the Table of the House.

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the transfer of some thousands of slaves, who had been owned by the late Sultan of Zanzibar, to the present Sultan recently appointed by Her Majesty's Government, was carried out with the knowledge and consent of Her Majesty's Government, or the Resident British Representatives, in view of the fact that Clause 4 of the Decree of 1890 declares that slaves could only be inherited at the death of their owner by the lawful children of the deceased, and that Clause 1 of the same Decree declares that the Decree should be binding on the Sultan as well as on his subjects?

*MR. CURZON: The hon. Member has not quite correctly quoted Clause 1 of the Decree of 1890, which he will see upon reference enjoins upon the Sultan, as well as his subjects, all former Decrees and Ordinances, but does not similarly enjoin the Decree in question. Indeed, in the Proclamation accompanying the Decree, it is expressly stated that the latter is to be made known to and obeyed by all the Sultan's subjects, but there is no mention of the Sultan. It is, however, unnecessary to raise the question of the legal interpretation of the Decree, since it has always been held that the slaves of the Sultan pass with the Crown; and they have been so inherited on two occasions since 1890.

CORN SALES.

MR. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a Select Committee which sat in 1892, 1893, on Corn Sales reported that the sale of all cereals, and the products thereof, should be conducted in Great Britain, as in Ireland, by the reference to the hundredweight, or 112 Imperial pounds; and that the members of the Corn Market at Glasgow passed a resolution in favour of the same; and whether he can see his way to promote the views of the said Committee?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir, I am aware of the Report of the Select Committee referred to by my hon. Friend, but I am not prepared to introduce any measure on the subject. I would remind my hon. Friend that there is nothing approaching agreement as to the abolition of the present local customs of sale by measure.

NEWBLISS COURT HOUSE (COUNTY MONAGHAN).

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what steps have been taken to secure that the court house in Newbliss, county Monaghan, should not be used as an Orange Lodge, in accordance with his promise in the last Session of Parliament?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No promise was given by me of the kind stated in the Question. What I did undertake was to refer the matter to the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor drew the attention of the magistrates to the occupation on the 13th July last of the Justices' room at Newbliss by a number of members of Orange lodges. The Magistrates replied that it was most imprudent and objectionable that a building, portion of which is used as a court house, should have been utilised for a political demonstration. The Magistrates further pointed out that the building in question is private property, one room only being rented by the Grand Jury as a public justice room under the provisions of Section 8 of the Petty Sessions Act. I have no power to take further action in the matter.

CRETE.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office are in receipt of any official information respecting the alleged attack upon, and the burning of, the village of Galata by armed bands of Mussulmen, and respecting the reported murder of a Christian judge, named M. Markoulakis, at Canea, on the 1st instant; and whether the representatives of the Powers have addressed representations or remonstrance to the Governor General of Crete on the subject of these disturbances?

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the Foreign Office had received information that a large number of Mussulman villagers had been driven from their homes in the interior of the island and were now refugees in towns on the coast?

*MR. CURZON: It is true, according to reports we have received, that large numbers of Mussulmans from Mussulman villages have migrated from the villages to the towns, but as to the circumstances under which this has taken place, we have no information. As to the Question of the hon. Member for Cork, we have heard nothing of the reported murder of M. Markoulakis. Our last reports state that fighting continues at Suda Bay and round Canea. The rumoured massacre of Christians at Galata had exasperated their co-religionists. At request of the Porte and the Vali, Her Majesty's Ambassador sent instructions to Her Majesty's Consul to do his utmost to restore order. Consul Biliotti and some of his colleagues, at the Vali's request, went with him yesterday to Suda Bay to use their influence with the armed Christians. For some time the continued fire prevented direct communication with the insurgents. The latest news is that, a messenger having at last reached the chiefs, the latter promised to cease firing if the troops did so, and the Vali had given orders to that effect. The Consuls are continuing their efforts to-day. An additional British ship of war has been sent to Canea.

Mr. FLYNN inquired if the Vali had sufficient authority, or was he restricted by the Governor?

*Mr. CURZON believed the Vali had ample authority, which he was using to the best of his power.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked if the right hon. Gentleman would cause inquiry to be made as to the reports of Mussulmans being driven from their homes?

*MR. CURZON said the inquiries made had reference to maltreatment of both parties, and, from reports received from the Consular authorities, no doubt he would be able to give further information in a few days.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of his statement made on 23rd March 1896, to the hon. Member for East Tyrone, to the effect that the Irish Government would consider at an early date the recommendation of the Commissioners of National Education that the average attendance to qualify for an assistant in a national school should be reduced from 70 to 60, whether he will ask the Treasury to sanction the grant necessary to meet the views of the Commissioners before the expiry of the present financial year?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have nothing further to add to the reply already given by me to the hon Member on Tuesday last. The Irish Government have been in communication with the Treasury, and I see no advantage in asking the Treasury to re-open the question during the present financial year.

LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA (MERCANTILE MARINE).

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) whether he can state the annual average number of masters and seamen killed and drowned at sea during the last ten years from registered steam and sailing trading vessels owned in the United Kingdom, and also the annual average number killed and drowned per thousand of men employed, including Lascars, but excluding yachtsmen, fishermen, and boy boatmen in both cases; and (2) will he also state whether the life loss has increased in proportion to the increased work done by British vessels during the same period?

MR. RITCHIE: The annual average number of masters and seamen, including Lascars, but excluding yachtsmen, fishermen, and boatmen, killed and drowned during the last ten years whilst under articles of agreement for service at sea in steam trading vessels, registered in the United Kingdom, was 876, of whom 472 lost their lives by wrecks and casualties, and 404 by other accidents; and in sailing trading vessels 998, of whom 629 lost their lives by wrecks and casualties, and 369 by other accidents. The annual average number killed and drowned per thousand employed was in steamers 6·028, of whom 3·248 were lost by wrecks and casualties, and 2·780 by other accidents; and in sailing vessels 15·173, of whom 9·564 were lost by wrecks and casualties, and 5·609 by other accidents. The last paragraph involves a question of opinion as to the amount of work done, and, therefore, I am not able to answer it.

Colonel DENNY: Arising out of this answer, may I assume that a statement made on January 25th, by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough that 93 in every 1,000 were killed or drowned is totally inaccurate? ["Hear, hear."]

[No answer was given.]

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) was about to ask a Question as to the number of men who had died on shore from injuries received on board, when

*Mr. SPEAKER interposed, directing that notice should be given of the Question.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION (INDIAN TROOPS).

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what has been the amount expended from the revenues of India on the Indian troops sent to Suakim?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): The expedition of Indian troops to Suakim did not throw any charge upon Indian revenues, but it did not relieve Indian revenues of the ordinary pay and allowances of the troops so sent. The ordinary pay and allowances of the troops dispatched is estimated to be about £40,000 for the period during which they were stationed in Suakim, but we have not received the full accounts. The extraordinary expenditure defrayed from the Treasury chest of the Imperial Government is about £145,000.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked if the noble Lord's estimate of £5,000 a month had been exceeded?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I think it is very nearly accurate. I estimated about £5,000 a month, and the troops were there 7½ months.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, whether he will state the items of charge for which the Supplementary Estimate is asked for the expenses of the Indian troops at Suakim?

*Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The details have not been received. The proposed Vote is based upon an Estimate of the extra expense incurred by the Indian Government, and is framed by it.

ERASMUS SMITH SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will at an early date give notice of the Amendments he proposes to move to the Bill of the hon. Member for Louth providing for the diversion of the endowments of the Erasmus Smith Schools in Ireland; and if he will give an undertaking that the Bill shall not be brought on without adequate notice and full opportunity for discussion?

Mr GERALD BALFOUR: I understand the Bill is down for Committee stage for the first Wednesday after the Whitsuntide holidays. The Amendments considered requisite by the Government are now in course of preparation and will be placed on the Paper in ample time to allow of their consideration before the Committee stage is reached.

*Mr. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: May I ask whether the Government will consider the statement sent by the Erasmus Board to the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary last year, and whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that an intense feeling of opposition exists to any unsettlement of an arrangement which has existed for two hundred years?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The representation in question was received and will be considered. Of course, I am aware that there is a strong feeling against any arrangement which might have the effect of disturbing the existing state of things.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (MEMBERS' SMOKING ACCOMMODATION).

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he has yet found time to give his attention to the very inadequate accommodation provided in this House for those Members who wish to smoke; whether he has any scheme for the improvement of this accommodation; and whether he will consider the advisability of allowing smoking in one of the compartments of the Library, as is done in the Library of the House of Lords?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): I have given a great deal of attention to this matter, but I regret to say that I have no practical proposal to make which is likely to meet with general approval, and I do not think any improvement can be obtained until some arrangement can be made for utilising one of the official residences for the direct service of the House. I have also considered the suggestion in the third paragraph of my hon. Friend's Question; but, bearing in mind the extensive use made of the Library by hon. Members generally, I fear it would not be possible to adopt it without causing great annoyance and inconvenience to many. [" Hear, hear !"]

Mr. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would approach the House of Lords with a view of seeing if it was not possible to obtain one of the rooms of that House to be used as a smoking room for hon. Members?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS did not think the matter rested with him. He would, however, put himself in communication with the House of Lords, though he did not think there was any room there which could be utilised by this House for the purpose suggested.

SOUTHWOLD (DAMAGE BY GALES).

Mr. HARRY FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the very serious injury to the coast of Southwold by the recent gales, which threatens disaster to the town unless prompt and adequate means of protection are provided against the further inroads of the sea, and of the inability of the town to provide the whole of the expense, he will cause immediate Inquiry to be made as to the extent of the danger and the best means of obviating it?

Mr. G. W. Wolff.

Mr. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade have been in communication with the Corporation of Southwold with regard to the steps to be taken by them to protect their coast against the inroads of the sea. I am not prepared at present to say that those steps will be inadequate, or that the Corporation will be unable financially to carry them out. Having regard, however, to the fact that there is some difference of opinion as to what should be done, and that any action taken at one part of Southwold may possibly have effect upon other interests, I have directed Sir George Nares to proceed to Southwold at the earliest possible date, to hold an Inquiry as regards the proposed works.

HOWELL'S CHARITY.

Mr. A. C. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomery): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education at what date the scheme for the Denbigh portion of the Howell's Charity was submitted by the Charity Commissioners to the Education Department; whether the doubts as to the area to which the endowment belongs were considered by the Charity Commissioners before they submitted the scheme; whether any similar doubts arose when the schemes dealing with the Cardiff portion of the Howell's Charity were under consideration by the Commissioners or the Department or are now entertained by the Department; what is the ground for the exclusion of the county of Glamorgan from the benefits of the Denbigh portion of the Howell's Charity; and, what steps the Department propose to take in order to obtain a decision on the question to whom the endowment belongs?

Sir J. GORST: The scheme was submitted in June 1895. I cannot answer for the Charity Commissioners, but the Glamorgan scheme was unopposed when approved by the Committee of Council. The Glamorganshire portion of the charity has already been dealt with separately by the scheme. The Committee of Council have informed the Joint Education Committee for Denbighshire and the governing body of Howell's Charity School, Denbigh, to suggest that some agreement might be arrived at between them.

Mr. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: Will similar communications be addressed to the other Welsh County Governing Bodies, who, under this scheme as drafted, have an interest in the Denbigh portion of the Charity?

Sir JOHN GORST: That suggestion shall be considered.

Mr. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last line of the question—whether any doubts are now entertained by the Department?

Sir JOHN GORST remarked that it was not the Department, but the Council, entertained doubts at this moment.

CROFTER COMMISSION (SCOTLAND).

Colonel RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can state what has been the cost to the public of the Crofter Commission in Scotland up to the present time; and, if he cannot state the sum, whether he has any objection to have a Return of the same laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. HANBURY: It will take a little time to get out the figures, but if the hon. and gallant Member will move for a Return it shall be presented in due course.

LONDONDERRY CORPORATION STOCK.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a consent order was on 7th December 1896, issued by the Local Government Board for the issue of stock by the Londonderry Corporation, without including among the sums to be raised £4,629 spent in obtaining the Londonderry Improvement Act, 1896; whether a new consent order was rendered necessary and was issued on 26th January 1897; whether he is aware that the loss to the Corporation owing to this delay, being the difference between the interest paid by the Corporation and the interest at which they will now be able to borrow, exceeds £120, in addition to the cost of the new order; and whether the Local Government Board will make up the loss due to their mistake?

***The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. John Atkinson, Londonderry, N.)**: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. The costs referred to were not included in the consent order of December 7th last, because the certificate of taxation was not signed until the 14th, and because they were not returned by the Corporation as an item to be covered by the proposed loan. It was not until the 29th of December that an application was made to the Local Government Board to issue an order to raise a loan for the amount of their costs. The only step taken by the Corporation in the matter after the 7th of December was the publication of advertisements calling a meeting of the Corporation to be held on the 29th January to create the stock. It was then considered better to issue a new order covering this sum of £4,629. The only costs incurred by the Corporation will be the costs of the fresh advertisement calling the meeting to create the stock, which can be held from 12 to 14 days after the 29th of January, the day originally named. The Corporation, and not the Local Government Board, are responsible for any delay which may have occurred, and any loss consequent thereon.

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether an Irish Corporation, issuing stock under the Order of 24th May 1892, is empowered to contract for the sale of stock before it has been created or a consent order has been granted?

***The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND**: Neither 30th Vict., cap. 29, Sec. 1, nor the provision of the regulation passed under the Health Act of 1890, prohibits such sale. The reply to the Question is, therefore, in the affirmative.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CORK.

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, pending a Measure for the settlement of the Irish University question, he will postpone making any appointment to the vacant Presidentship of the Cork Queen's College?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The passing of a Measure for the settlement of the Irish University question still belongs to the region of contingency. The course proposed by the hon. and learned Member is not, in my opinion, one which it would be practicable to pursue.

MUSGRAVE STREET POLICE BARRACKS (BELFAST).

MR. WOLFF: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a petition has been presented by the men stationed at the police barracks, Musgrave Street, Belfast, to the Inspector General, requesting that some notice be taken of the sanitary condition of the barracks, and that several men are laid up with illness in consequence of the defective sanitary conditions, and two men have died of typhoid fever since Christmas; and whether he will take the necessary steps to put the sanitary condition of the barracks in proper order?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed that such a petition has been received from the police stationed at this barrack. It is true that two of the men have died of typhoid fever since Christmas last, but there is no case at present of serious illness connected with the station. The medical and sanitary officers are now inquiring into the sanitary condition of the barrack, and the attention of the Board of Works has also been directed to the matter.

IRISH RESIDENT MAGISTRACY (MAJOR N. GOSSELIN).

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state over what district Major N. Gosselin, who appears in the official lists as an Irish resident magistrate, exercises jurisdiction; has he drawn pay as an Irish resident magistrate; and for how many years, at how much per year?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Major Gosselin is not employed as a resident magistrate in Ireland. He was seconded for employment on special duty some years ago, and does not receive any emoluments as resident magistrate.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if Major Gosselin is not on the list of resident magistrates in Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, he is on the list.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why is he?

[No answer was given.]

RATING OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (LONDON).

MR. HARRY MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the amount voted for rates and contributions in lieu of rates on Government property in London in the financial year 1893–4, and the estimate of the amount required for rates and contributions in lieu of rates on Government property in London in the financial year 1897–8?

MR. MARKS also asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether he would state the amount voted for rates and contributions in lieu of rates on Goverment property in the United Kingdom in the financial year 1893–4, and the estimate of the amount required for rates and contributions in lieu of rates on Government property in the United Kingdom in the financial year 1897–8?

MR. HANBURY: In 1893–4 the amounts voted were:—For London, £94,630 gross and £85,980 net; for the United Kingdom, £248,490 gross and £237,690 net. The estimate for 1897–8 is as follows:—For London, £151,990 gross and £140,990 net; for the United Kingdom, £403,960 gross and £385,790 net.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to what purpose the Government propose to devote the £120,000 provided in his financial statement for the current year for grants to the Voluntary Schools?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: It will fall into the surplus of the year.

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION (CASTLETON).

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (York, W.R., Morley): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been called to a letter of the Education Department, dated 23rd December last, addressed to Mr. R. Matthews, Castleton, in which the Department refused to allow a Wesleyan school to be reopened as a public elementary school on the ground that the building does not satisfy the present requirements of the Code; and whether, having regard to the fact that he has sanctioned the readmission of the St. Jude's National School to grants, although it does not conform to the rules of the Code, he will reconsider his decision with regard to the Castleton Wesleyan School?

SIR J. GORST: The question of the admission of the Castleton Wesleyan School to grants has not been finally decided. The managers have been asked to submit plans for submission to the architect of the Committee of Council. The St. Jude's National School has conformed to the rules of the Code, though it is not planned as a new school would have been.

RAILWAY EXTENSIONS (DONEGAL).

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can make any statement as to contemplated railway extensions in Donegal?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think it would be expedient at present to make any statement regarding railway extensions under the Act of last year.

SHEFFIELD COTTAGE HOMES FOR CHILDREN.

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will lay upon the Table the Reports of the chief inspector, the medical inspector, and the architect, respecting the Sheffield Cottage Homes for Children, together with the reply of the Sheffield Guardians?

MR. CHAPLIN: If the hon. Member desires to move for a Return of the Reports referred, to and of the reply of the Guardians of the Sheffield Union, I shall be prepared to assent to the motion.

PRISONERS' PROPERTY FUND.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will lay upon the Table the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Prisoners' Property Fund; and whether he has come to any decision respecting the audit of the fund?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY: I have no objection to laying the Report on the Table if the hon. Member desires it. I hope to introduce a Bill dealing with the question of audit and other matters.

POOR LAW SCHOOLS (METROPOLIS).

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will defer his decision in the matter of the proposed Order respecting the Administration of Metropolitan Poor Law Schools until this House has had an opportunity of discussing the scheme, having regard to the fact that it sets up an entirely new central authority for the government of the Metropolis, whilst at the same time it does not carry out the essential recommendation of the recent Committee?

MR. CHAPLIN: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension if he supposes that the Local Government Board propose to constitute a new central authority for the government of the Metropolis. The Order which the Board propose to issue refers to an authority to undertake the charge of certain classes of children in the Metropolis who are now maintained at the cost of the rates, this being one of the recommendations of the Committee he refers to. I cannot give the undertaking which the hon. Member asks for.

LICENSED PREMISES (ADVERTISEMENTS).

MR. S. YOUNG (Cavan, E.), I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been called to a recent case in which the chairman of a bench of magistrates called on a firm of wine and spirit merchants and ordered them to remove at once certain wine, spirit, and beer advertisements which are affixed to the walls of the premises facing the public roads; and, whether licensing magistrates have power to order the removal of such advertisements from licensed premises?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Except by the Question of the hon. Member, my attention has not been called to the case to which he refers. Without fuller knowledge of the facts, I cannot express an opinion upon the merits of the case, but I am not aware of any general power possessed by the magistrates to order the removal of such advertisements.

ROYAL RESIDENCE IN IRELAND.

Mr. DANE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed at the annual general meeting of the Irish Tourist Association, presided over by the Earl of Mayo, expressive of an earnest desire that on the occasion of the celebration of the sixtieth year of the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty a Royal residence may be established; and whether the Government will take the matter into serious consideration?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) replied that his attention had been called to the resolution. He was afraid he could not discuss, in answer to the question, the *pros* and *cons* of the matter, but it had been brought under the attention of the Government both in Debates in the House and otherwise.

SUPPLY (IRISH ESTIMATES).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, can he indicate the period at which he proposes to take the first Irish Vote in Supply; and what it would probably be?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY replied that he should be glad to consult, as far as possible, the convenience of hon. Members from Ireland. Without pledging himself, it might be convenient to employ the Friday in the week in which the financial relations of England and Ireland were discussed. He would consider that.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL GRANT (IRISH EQUIVALENT).

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can inform the House what amount will be allotted to Ireland as an equivalent for the considerable grant of money which will, under the Resolution before the House, become payable to Voluntary Schools in England and Ireland out of the general taxation?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, who replied, said if the matter were considered on the basis of equivalent grants it would be necessary to bear in mind the fact that Ireland already received a larger proportion of the total cost of national education from the Exchequer than either England or Scotland. But, as he had already explained in answer to questions, it was not intended to deal with the matter on the basis of equivalent grants.

Mr. FLYNN said the sum was an additional one.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: But if you get too much already you cannot expect more. [*Laughter.*]

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS GRANT (SCOTCH EQUIVALENT).

Mr. T. C. H. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, with reference to the Voluntary Schools Bill now before the House, it is proposed to make an equivalent grant to Scotland; and, if so, whether it is intended to make the proposal in the course of the present Session; and upon what ratio it is intended to base such equivalent?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I answered this question on Tuesday.

HOURS OF POLLING (METROPOLIS).

Mr. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the number of working men employed in the City of London who do not leave work till after seven o'clock, many of whom are practically disfranchised by the present election law, he will consider the expediency of extending the hours of polling in metropolitan constituencies till at least nine o'clock.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The grievance to which the hon. Member refers, has not been brought to my notice. But if it is, I will give it full consideration.

EPISCOPAL ELECTIONS (DISCREDITABLE SCENES).

Mr. HARRY FOSTER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the scenes which were recently witnessed at Bow Church at the confirmation of the elections of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London; and whether, with a view to prevent a recurrence of such scenes, the Government will at an early date introduce legislation for either abolishing the ceremonial or insuring that objections when invited shall be properly heard and adjudicated upon.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: My attention has been called to the discreditable scenes to which my hon. Friend refers, but I can make no pledge with regard to legislation on the subject.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.).

MR. MUNDELLA asked the First Lord of the Treasury a question arising out of his statement in moving the Education Resolution on Monday. He desired to know whether the words "not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools" did not make the grant applicable to all children on the register, whereas all grants hitherto had been made on average attendance, the number on the register being nearly 600,000 children in excess of average attendance. There was no precedent for any grant except on the basis of average attendance. Would the right hon. Gentleman have the notice relating to the resolution in the Votes so amended as to make the point clear?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman has correctly interpreted the speech I made on Monday. It is unnecessary to amend the Resolution, and if the right hon. Gentleman will wait until the Bill is printed, he will see that the point he takes is adequately dealt with. ["Hear, hear!"]

EXPLOSION AT WOOLWICH.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley) asked the Under Secretary for War if he had any particulars of a reported explosion during experiments with cordite at Woolwich?

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS replied that he had received no report on the subject, but one would be in his hands in a day or two. Meanwhile, he believed there was a great deal more noise than damage caused by the explosion. The explosion was caused during an experiment with cordite, carried out under proper precautions, to ascertain whether cordite under certain conditions would burn harmlessly away or explode.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY answering a question which, in his absence had been addressed to the Under Secretary for War by Sir C. Dilke (Gloucester, Forest of Dean), stated that probably it would be convenient next Monday to get the Speaker out of the Chair on the Army Estimates.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Captain John Sinclair, for County of Forfar.

Louis Sinclair, esquire, for County of Essex (Southern or Romford Division).

Samuel Woods, esquire, for County of Essex (South Western or Walthamstow Division).

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (FOREIGN SHIPOWNERS) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Tuesday next till Tuesday 16th February.

MOTION.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND)

Bill to amend The Trusts (Scotland) Act (1867) Amendment Act, 1887, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 118.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS [AID GRANT, ETC.]

Resolution reported:—

"That it is expedient—

(*a*) to authorise the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of an aid grant to Voluntary Schools, not exceeding five shillings per scholar for the whole number of scholars in those schools;

(*b*) to repeal as regards day schools so much of section nineteen of The Elementary Education Act 1876, as imposes a limit on the parliamentary grant to Elementary Schools in England and Wales; and

(*c*) to make provision for the exemption from rates of Voluntary Schools."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. H. H. ASQUITH (Fife, E.), who was cheered by the Opposition on rising, said: Sir, I make no apology for inviting the House at this stage to review the conclusions arrived at by the Committee and to decline to assent to the resolution in which those conclusions are embodied. Sir, we have throughout this matter maintained, I believe, a perfectly clear and absolutely consistent position from the first moment that the controversy originated. We are agreed that if it could be shown with regard to any integral factor of our national educational system the machine was being subjected to an undue strain, with the result that the work turned out was either deficient in quantity or quality, we would not be niggard nor ungenerous in making any provision from the public fund that might be necessary. ["Hear, hear"!] I say that, because to-night we are compelled to ask the House to negative this resolution. [*Cheers.*] We therefore might appear to be asserting that there is no class of the so-called Voluntary Schools which is in need of any further provision from Imperial funds. If we are compelled to take up that position the responsibility does not rest with us—it has been forced upon us by the method of procedure deliberately adopted and pressed upon us by the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. and learned Solicitor General the other night quoted from a speech I made in moving the rejection of last year's Bill a passage in which I asserted that, subject to reasonable and adequate safeguards, we were perfectly ready to consider a proposal for giving further public assistance to denominational schools. But if, as appears to be the case, the hon. and learned Gentleman referred to that passage for the purpose of showing that we are receding from the position we took up, then I must at once correct that impression. I went on in the same speech to develop in detail what were the conditions and safeguards subject to which we were prepared to assent to this grant. There were several of them, but there were two in particular on which we laid then, as we lay to-day, a special stress. In the first place, we said, and we say now, that if public money is to be devoted to such a purpose it must be under such conditions as will secure its impartial distribution amongst all the necessitous claimants for it, and as will not disturb but will preserve the statutory equality which has hitherto existed between Voluntary and Board Schools. ["Hear, hear"!] The phrase "statutory equality" we owe to the Duke of Devonshire, but it has now apparently become a laughing-stock upon the Treasury Bench. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and after him the hon. and learned Solicitor General, sought to convict their colleagues of a fallacy, or, at any rate, of a misdescription. And why? Because, forsooth, the 97th section of the Education Act of 1870 enables a special and limited provision to be made in the cases of necessitous School Boards, and because out of the total expenditure of £7,000,000 per annum on national education it has only been taken advantage of to the extent of £40,000. That is the extent to which the statutory equality has been dislocated and disturbed. We are perfectly ready, if any distribution of this fund is to be made between the two classes of schools on the one side and the other, that it should be debited in the first instance with £40,000 as you did in the Bill of last year. There is another condition on which we insisted then and on which we insist now. It was that whatever money is granted must be granted under adequate security that it will be spent entirely and exclusively on the improvement of our educational system. ["Hear, hear!"] What is the position in which we stand to-night? We have here a Resolution in which we are asked to declare that Voluntary Schools as a class without any distinction of denomination, are entitled to further provision out of the public funds, and the right hon. Gentleman will not allow us to annex to that declaration any of those qualifying and limiting conditions which, in our judgment, were last year, and remain to-day essential to secure the just distribution of the fund and its exclusive appropriation to the maintenance or the elevation of our national education. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-General told us the other night that when we talked of safeguards we ought to wait until we see the Bill. But the Bill cannot possibly contain them. ["Hear, hear!"] The Bill must be limited by the Resolution. ["Hear, hear!"] The same argument does not in terms apply to the Amendments put forward with reference to the other point—namely, to secure the exclusive application of the money to educational purposes. What treatment have these Amendments received? [*Cheers.*] My hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon proposed to insert the word "necessitous" in the Resolution. That Amendment received scant courtesy from the Government and was rejected by an overwhelming majority. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Hon. Members opposite applaud that statement. [*Ministerial cheers.*] My hon. Friend the Member for Bishop Auckland also put down an Amendment to the effect that the whole of this additional grant should be applied to the improvement of the teaching staff of the schools which would benefit by it, and he took the precaution to couch his Amendment in terms which he borrowed from the Bill of last year. What became of that Amendment? It was not allowed to cross the threshold of Parliamentary discussion, as the right. hon. Gentleman moved the Closure. ["Hear, hear!"] I say, therefore, that if we are to-night compelled to deal with this Resolution from the point of view and attitude of simple negation, the cause is to be found in the procedure adopted by the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Now I will come to close quarters with the Resolution. And the first and main ground on which I ask the House to decline to agree with the Resolution is this—that the money to be granted by this Resolution is to be applied, not to the equal and impartial relief of necessitous schools of all classes, but to preferential relief of a particular category of schools. [*Cheers.*] We are told that in the interests of Parliamentary time it is expedient to proceed in a matter of this kind by two Bills instead of one. That is an argument so transparently fallacious that it does not impose on anyone on either side of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] What do you do? You have two Bills instead of one in order to save Parliamentary time. What is the necessary result of that operation? It is that you are going to create injustice by one Bill in order to remove it by another. [*Cheers.*] And this you put forward as an economical expedient to save time and trouble and to avoid unnecessary friction in our controversies. If the Government have both objects in view—I mean the relief of the Voluntary and the relief of the necessitous Board Schools alike—it is obvious to the merest tyro in Parliamentary procedure that they ought to have prosecuted the attainment of both objects concurrently as part and parcel of a single integral scheme. [*Cheers.*] The only argument that could have been resorted to by the Government to displace the hypothesis which we are obliged to suggest to the House—namely, that they do not attach equal weight to the two objects, and that while attaching more importance to the one they relegate the other to the uncertain hazards of a later period of the Session—is that it is necessary to pass the Bill before March 31 in order that the denominational schools shall not be deprived of the money which everyone is agreed they are entitled to. But that argument is gone. [*Cheers.*] The Government themselves do not pretend that it is necessary to pass the Bill by March 31, and it is obvious on the face of the Bill that it never was intended to come into operation by that time. [*Cheers.*] We have not yet had any adequate or even plausible explanation of the rise of the grant from 4s. last year to 5s. this year, except that the extra shilling was intended as some kind of compensation or solatium to the denominational schools for the postponed fulfilment of their long-deferred hopes. ["Hear, hear!"] I am glad it is frankly admitted by hon. Gentlemen opposite that that is the intention, as it certainly will be the effect, of carrying this Bill. [*Cheers.*] Now I come to my second and only other ground which I shall lay before the House for refusing to assent to this Resolution, and that is founded upon the method and machinery proposed for the distribution of this large sum of public money, a subject which, I think, has not yet been adequately discussed. [" Hear, hear! "] This purports to be a grant at the rate of 5s. a head per child to the denominational schools of the country. This 5s. per head, if it is intended to designate the measure of relief to be given to necessitous schools, is a misnomer, and, indeed, a fiction. The Government are not going and do not propose to give 5s. a head per child to the necessitous schools. I will show what it is proposed to do. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartford, in the course of his interesting speech the other night—and I think we shall all agree that in the course of this Debate candid friendship has been more ebullient than party loyalty on that side of the House—[" hear, hear! "]—referred to a school in his own constituency where, owing to the operation of the enlarged fee grant, as compared with the fees charged before 1891, and the maintenance of the subscriptions at their old level—

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): The whole of the Voluntary Schools; no particular school.

MR. ASQUITH: That strengthens the point. The case he put is not an isolated or exceptional, but a typical, case as regards a large number of denominational schools. This school, owing to the enlarged fee grant as compared with the fees charged before 1891, and to the maintenance of what I cannot help thinking is a very proper spirit which might be imitated in other parts—owing to the maintenance by subscribers of their old level of generosity this school is under no strain, but has got a large pecuniary surplus. That is the case of the whole of the Church Schools in the county of Kent, and, therefore, I quite agree it would have been an extravagant and unjustifiable thing if Her Majesty's Government had proposed to make this grant of 5s. all round. I want the House to realise how the 5s. comes in and where the 5s. goes out, because the 5s. is really a bogus sum. [*Cheers.*] The 5s. comes in in the form of a multiple. You take the whole number of children in average attendance. [" No, on the register."] I assume that, because the right hon. Gentleman is, I understand, going to say that is so. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: " I have said so."] You take the whole number of children in average attendance in all the Voluntary Schools of the country, necessitous or otherwise, including the schools in Kent, where they have the large surplus—then take the number of children in average attendance in every one of the Voluntary Schools, rich and poor alike, without any discrimination whatever, and you multiply it by 5s. and arrive at the sum of £616,000. What is the use of this nugatory and artificial process of multiplying by 5s. per head? Why cannot you say frankly at once, " We are going to give a lump sum of £616,000 to the denominational schools of the country " ? For what possible purpose is the 5s. brought in except to give an appearance of moderation in the amount of the grant you are going to dispense? We come to the question of distribution. You have some £620,000 to distribute. You are going to distribute it among necessitous schools, and among those alone. Does it not follow as a plain arithmetical proposition that, inasmuch as the well-to-do schools which had been counted for the purpose of multiplying the 5s., are to be excluded from the operation of the grant, the average grant to be given to necessitous schools must by the process of absolute and inevitable logic very largely exceed 5s. a head. [*Cheers.*] Then do not let us hear anything more about the 5s. grant. A right hon. Friend reminds me that the sum will increase year by year although the necessities may diminish. Although the idyllic state of things which prevails in the county of Kent may become well-nigh universal, this sum is going on automatically increasing. The sum granted may become larger every year. There is to be no maximum and no minimum. If that is so, does it not become all the more necessary that we should scrutinise somewhat closely the machinery by which this process of unfettered and unlimited discretion is to be carried out. I ask attention to a point, which has hitherto almost escaped notice, in regard to the machinery to be brought into existence for the purpose of distributing the grants. The £620,000 is to be doled out in lump sums to associations —voluntary and irresponsible associations —[*cheers*]—to be apportioned at their discretion, tempered by the supervisory control of the Education Department. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I have not forgotten that that is the ideal which is to be aimed at. Some schools will, no doubt, be allowed to remain in independent isolation and deal directly with the Department, but an indirect and most effective instrument of coercion has been provided, because any school which in the opinion of the Education Department unreasonably abstains from entering into one of these voluntary associations is to forfeit the whole of the grant which it would otherwise have. You may have a school which has complied with all the conditions of the Code, which is in every way efficient as an educational agency, but because its managers do not choose, for some ground which the Department considers unreasonable, to join an association it is to forfeit its title to public money. When I heard the right hon. Gentleman the other night unfold this extraordinary and unprecedented proposal I could not help asking myself, What does Lord Salisbury think? We know what his opinion of Government Departments, and of the Education Department in particular, was during the most fruitful and beneficent administration of my right hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham. [*Cheers.*] My right hon. Friend must now be somewhat amused to find that Archbishops and Bishops are tumbling over one another in their eagerness to give him certificates of character. [*A laugh.*] After being bespattered with clerical abuse he is now within measurable distance—if, indeed, he has not reached the point—of being synodically whitewashed. [*Laughter and cheers.*] Lord Salisbury spoke at Preston on the general question of the Departments at Whitehall, and of the Education Department in particular, and I want to quote to hon. Gentlemen opposite the language in which their Prime Minister and Leader described the Department which is to be the only safeguard as between an association on the one side and the taxpayers on the other for the proper distribution of this fund. He spoke of the Education Department as a despotic central department whose thoughts are wooden, whose system is red tape, and whose one hope is to reduce to perfect uniformity the actions of all under them into submission to conceptions which have been elaborated at Whitehall. He may think matters have changed for the better at Whitehall—["hear, hear!"]—under the mild and unobtrusive rule of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University. [*Loud and prolonged ironical Opposition cheers.*] I do not know, but I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council will not always be at Whitehall. [*Cheers.*] That provisional safeguard against the autocracy which Lord Salisbury describes in such scathing language must—I do not wish to anticipate the future—in the course of time be removed. We shall once more have to listen to the despotism which Lord Salisbury has characterised in the language which I read out a moment ago, and every school that prefers to its own independence absolute incorporation and mergence in these voluntary associations may, at the discretion of the Education Department, be entitled to a share in this grant. I am not, I need hardly say, using this argument by way of disparagement of the Education Department. Last year we fought the battle of the Education Department against Her Majesty's Government—["hear, hear!"]—and it was because we believed that the Education Bill of last year, by paralysing and crippling the energies of that Department in the sphere in which its energy and activity are legitimate and most useful, would have dealt a death-blow—well, at any rate, would have removed one of the most efficient safeguards for our national system of education—["hear, hear!"]—it was for that reason that we resisted it, and had behind us public opinion. [*Cheers.*] But you are seeking here to put on the Education Department functions which are not in the slightest degree analogous to those which it has hitherto discharged, and which it is totally out of the power of any public department properly to discharge. The right hon. Baronet (Sir W. Hart Dyke), who speaks with great experience, for he was several years at the head of the Education Department, has told us truly that the Department was in the habit of distributing large sums of public money every year to the primary schools in the country in the shape of grants, and asked, if they could trust them for that purpose, why could they not also trust them to distribute this money, or to hand it over to the associations? I say there is no analogy whatever as between the two cases. [*Cheers.*] The Education Department at present, in the distribution of the sum which is voted by Parliament every year as a grant in aid of elementary education, is subject to fixed rules which are embodied in the Code and in Acts of Parliament, and that Code is every year laid on the Table of the House and is subject to the direct control of Parliament. These tests are supplied by a body of inspectors appointed by the Education Department and responsible to it, and whose salaries are every year voted by this House out of the taxation of the country. ["Hear, hear!"] We have, therefore, in the distribution of the grant by the Education Department a function carefully safeguarded at every point by Parliamentary control, and into which it is impossible that abuses or shortcomings should enter without their being detected. But when you go and put the Education Department in the position of a kind of general superintendence with no defined powers or statutory functions—a general superintendence over a loose system of eleemosynary relief, which is to be carried out by means of voluntary associations which have no statutory authority and no responsibility to Parliament or the public—you are imposing on the Education Department a function which, however highly you may estimate its powers, neither it nor any other public department is fitted to discharge. [*Cheers.*] The result is that when you come to analyse the method and machinery by which these sums are to be distributed, you will find that that grant—not merely to be voted out of the taxation of the present year as an experiment or a temporary dole, but to be placed on the Statute Book as a permanent charge on the Consolidated Fund of the country—I say we have none of those securities which, in the interests of our constituents, we have a right and it is our duty to demand. It ought to be subject to Parliamentary control, and the money in its application ought not to be frittered away in favouritism and jobbery. [*Cheers.*] I have now said all that I have to say. I have not endeavoured to exhaust the ground or to direct the attention of the House to points which have already been exhaustively discussed. But I will say in conclusion, as I did at the beginning, that we take our stand for our resistance to this resolution, not upon any unwillingness to make good the admitted deficiencies of our educational system, whether they exist in the Voluntary or the Board Schools, but on the fact that this Resolution introduces a principle of invidious discrimination entirely opposed to the statutory equality which has hitherto prevailed, and provides methods and machinery that afford no adequate security that the intentions of the Legislature shall be carried out, and that the money of the taxpayers shall not be irremediably squandered. [*Loud cheers.*]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is certainly not the least ingenious debater amongst the most distinguished debaters which this House at present possesses. ["Hear, hear!"] But even his ingenuity was somewhat put to it to explain to the House why it was that, while he approved of a grant being given to necessitous schools, he was, nevertheless, going to vote against the Resolution, the passing of which he admits to be necessary in order that such benefit may be conferred. [*Opposition cries of* "No, no!"] The right hon. Gentleman repeated and emphasised the statement he made last year to the effect that, in his judgment, Voluntary Schools required relief, ought to have relief, and that that relief should come out of the Imperial Exchequer. We bring in a Bill which gives necessitous schools relief out of the Imperial Exchequer, and the first step the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends takes it to go into the Lobby in the hope of defeating, if they can, the Measure that they have admitted to be necessary, and without which their object cannot be carried out. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman says he will not have this Bill, because it does not go far enough. He objects to an instalment because he cannot get all he desires. ["Hear, hear!"] That is not politics; that is not statesmanship. [*Cheers.*] That is simply the exercise of an ingenuity on the part of an Opposition who are determined to thwart the Government in all their proceedings by the best means in their power. ["Hear, hear!"] If these means are not very effective, if the reasons by which they are supported must seem to be inconclusive, that is due not to the exposition which the right hon. Gentleman has just given, but to the difficulty of the case. Before I come to that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech which dealt with the subsequent provisions for which this Bill is the preparation, I shall say a word, and only a word, upon what may be called some of the subsidiary questions in controversy which have been brought incidentally to our notice in the course of these Debates. In the first place the right hon. Gentleman has followed the speeches on that bench in thinking, if not positively asserting, that in bringing forward this Resolution as we have brought it forward, and in wording it as we have worded it, we have been guilty of some too clever trick by which legitimate Parliamentary criticism may be obviated. Sir, the man who makes that accusation in good faith—and I do not doubt the good faith of the right hon. Gentleman opposite—is either totally ignorant of, or has totally forgotten, the methods and traditions of the procedure of the House in cases like this. ["Hear, hear!"] As far as I am concerned I frankly tell the House I have always thought that this practice sanctioned by immemorial usage of introducing money Bills into Committee of the whole House, belongs to an ancient and, I think, a somewhat outworn portion of our Constitution, and might well be dispensed with—["hear, hear!"]—and nobody, so far as this particular case is concerned, would be more glad to have it dispensed with than I myself. ["Hear, hear!"] A whole Parliamentary week has been spent in the discussion. ["No, no!"] Well, four days—the best part of a Parliamentary week—which, but for these Resolutions, we should never have required to occupy at all, have been expended on this stage. When it is suggested by right. hon. Gentlemen opposite that I have departed from all Parliamentary practice and traditions for the solitary purpose of preventing them from introducing an Amendment, of which they gave me no notice before, it seems to me that they are charging the Government with refusing a demand which no Opposition has ever made before on any Government. [*Cheers.*] Are you to depart from every well-established rule for the solitary purpose of enabling unnecessary discussion to be indulged in by any Gentleman who wishes to do so? Our procedure on money Bills is settled by long tradition, from which we have not departed by a hair's breadth. The terms of this Resolution are settled by the officers of the House, over whom we exercise no control, and if there has been any inconvenience the fault lies with the methods of the House, and not with any peculiar use of those methods adopted on this occasion by Her Majesty's Government. So much for the form of the Resolution. With regard to the other subsidiary points that have been raised we have been told—I am especially told—that I have shown vacillation and inconsistency in the course I have pursued with regard to this matter. It so happens that in this particular case there has absolutely not been a shadow or shade of turning from the time when the Bill of last year was dropped till the time when the Bill of this year was introduced. Anybody who takes the trouble—I do not advise them to do it—to read the speeches which I have made upon the topic—I think, so far as I remember, there have only been three—one in the House when announcing the withdrawal of last year's Bill, another shortly afterwards in St. James's Hall, and the third at Rochdale in the autumn, will see quite clearly these two things. In the first place, that the only pledge, either in letter or in spirit, which I gave was that the Voluntary Schools should not suffer by the dropping of the Bill of last year; and, in the second place, that the Government were resolved not to weight this Measure for the relief of Voluntary Schools by adding to it extraneous provisions regarding other matters, however important or however excellent. ["Hear, hear!"] That may have been a wrong decision—I am coming to the question of substance before I sit down—but with regard to the question of consistency it has been my view throughout, the view I held last June, the view which I still hold, and the view which I believe best both for Voluntary Schools, the procedure of this House, and, I will add, for necessitous Board Schools. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said that if Voluntary Schools ought to have 5s., why did not you give them 5s. last year, and if they ought to have only 4s., why do you give them 5s. this year; and he asked, "Is this not merely a dole and a sop to condole them for not getting the Bill before March 31?" Many Gentlemen in this House, no doubt, speak of the liabilities thrown upon the Exchequer with a happy irresponsibility, and I think one very excellent Friend of mine made a speech in this Debate in which he airily suggested that the whole cost of the education of all the children in all schools, Board and Voluntary, should be thrown on the Exchequer. That is a plan for which much may be said, but it is one which no Chancellor of the Exchequer is likely to look on with any great favour. But among those irresponsible expenders of public money, surely the right hon. Gentleman opposite ought not to be one. He has been a Member, and will, no doubt, again be one of the most important Members in an Administration responsible for the public purse, and he must know that the amount which the Exchequer gives to an object is not always, perhaps is not usually, simply and solely determined by the value of the object, but is largely determined, and must always be largely determined, even if this country was twice as rich as it is now, by the resources of the Chancellor of the Exchequer who has to give it. If that simple proposition be accepted, as I think it must be, the House will see that neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor I were in a position last June, nor until many months after last June, to say that we were in a position to promise an increased grant to Voluntary Schools. No doubt that uncertainty did carry a corresponding uncertainty into the exact form which this Bill should take, and the exact Parliamentary procedure that should be adopted in connection with it. When I knew that my right hon. Friend could give me the 5s.—which is not, in my judgment, one bit too much for the necessities of the case—[*cheers*]—many competent persons say it is too little for the necessities of the case—[*cheers*]—I confess I dismissed from my mind all anxiety as to the precise moment at which the Bill should become law, for I felt that the pledge given by the Government was not only redeemed, but amply redeemed, by the Bill we are introducing now. Let me add this, that, though it is not absolutely necessary that this Bill should become law by a particular hour or a particular day, it is of the utmost necessity that the Bill should become law soon—[*cheers*]—and that not merely in connection with the general programme of Government business—though in that connection its speedy passage is important—but also in connection with the Voluntary Schools which it is intended to assist. That machinery, so unjustly attacked by the right hon. Gentleman, by which we hope to make this money go as far as possible to help the necessitous portion of the Voluntary Schools, is not machinery that you can set up at a moment's notice. It must, in the nature of the case, take time, and as it is desirable that the money should be given to the Voluntary Schools as soon as possible, so it is eminently desirable that we should without a moment's unnecessary delay pass this Bill into law as it stands and make all preparations which are absolutely essential before the money which we design for these Voluntary Schools can be distributed among them to the best advantage. [*Cheers.*] I am bound to say that I think some of my old Friends have shown considerable innocence of mind in the manner in which they have received the criticisms of the other side with regard to this date of March 31. I think, if they will consider the matter, they will see that the irritation shown by Gentlemen opposite at the announcement that it was not absolutely vital, however desirable, to pass the Bill by that date was a disappointment not born of any regard for Voluntary Schools, but was simply and solely the disappointment of foiled Parliamentary tacticians. [*Laughter and cheers.*] I have not a doubt that they have been hugging to themselves all the autumn and in the early part of this present Session the thought that, by dint of those arts of which they are past masters, the Government might be driven over the fatal day or else might be compelled, in order to get it through by the fatal day, to adopt those methods which we have always done our best to avoid—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and Ministerial cheers*]—and which I have not the slightest doubt they would be delighted to see us practice. Let my hon. Friends remember that, on a question of Parliamentary tactics, what disappoints the Opposition should be hailed with pleasure by us—["hear, hear!"]—and no better proof of the wisdom of the course the Government has pursued—I am talking purely from the tactical point of view—will be found than the ill-concealed bitterness of the disappointment of hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Cheers.*] I pass from the attacks of the right hon. Gentleman upon these extraneous and subsidiary matters to his criticism upon the substance of the Resolution itself and of the Bill to which it is preparatory. I will begin by dealing with his criticism upon the 5s. grant. I confess that when I heard him, after 48 hours' cool reflection, repeat again on Thursday the criticism which he made late on Tuesday, I listened to him with great surprise. He characterised it on Tuesday as something in the nature of fraud—or, at all events, deception. To-night he said it was a bogus 5s.

> "Wouldn't it," he said, "have been much simpler and much better to take your £620,000 or whatever it is, and distribute it as a fixed sum among the necessitous Voluntary Schools?"

Surely the right hon. Gentleman is capable of seeing that it was a far better plan, when you are passing a Bill of this kind, so to fix the Parliamentary contribution as that it shall have some relation to the needs of that for which Parliament contributes it. [*Opposition cheers.*] It is perfectly true that no conceivable system can be adjusted with absolute accuracy to any such purpose. It is perfectly conceivable that the needs of the Voluntary Schools instead of increasing or remaining stationary, in accordance with the number of children in the schools, may become less. Surely we may take it broadly that, if we can take a certain sum of money and distribute it at a rate which varies with the number of children in Voluntary Schools we are adopting a system far more elastic, far more adjustable to the varying needs of Voluntary Schools than any method of a fixed sum which could be introduced into a permanent till. ["Hear, hear!"] The number of children in Voluntary Schools has increased by 30,000, I think, since last year. It may increase, for anything I know to the contrary, by 20,000 next year. If you gave a fixed sum, if you put in a fixed and immovable sum, there is every probability that while the needs of the Voluntary Schools increase the amount given to those needs would be relatively diminished. Supposing the ill-concealed wishes of hon. Gentlemen were fulfilled and the Voluntary Schools were squeezed out of existence and universal School Boards took their place. It is manifest that, with your fixed sum in your till, there would be a great deal more money than would be required to meet the necessities of the case. I believe the actual method adopted by the Government, described by the right hon. Gentleman opposite as fraudulent on Tuesday and bogus on Thursday, is the simplest, the easiest, and the most obvious method by which the results desired can be attained. ["Hear, hear!"] I am convinced that the more the matter is considered—and, no doubt, it will receive consideration in Committee on the Bill—whatever other criticism may be passed on our scheme, that criticism at all events, is one which has very small foundation. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman went on to attack in detail our plan of associated schools. That plan was stated by me on Monday because I thought the House had better know the general bearing of the scheme proposed. But I must point out that in reality it does not come within the terms of the Resolution. I do not say that the right hon. Gentleman opposite was out of order in alluding to it, but it is really a question of machinery, and the proper time to discuss it is not when we are discussing the Resolution, but when we have the Bill before us and the machinery is there laid out in sight of all men, and it can be dealt with either generally or in detail. But the right hon. Gentleman has made an attack on the machinery of the Bill, and I do not want his speech to go forth without some reply. I could not quite make out what the general view of the right hon. Gentleman was, for it appeared to me that he was labouring to establish two mutually destructive propositions. When he wanted to attack the association he seemed to think that responsibility should be left to the Department, and when he wanted to attack the Department he said:—

> "How is it possible for the Department to bear this heavy load on its already over-weighted shoulders?"

Now, I am the last person to deny that the Bill does throw responsibility on the Department, and I will say further that if the Department had to consider the claim of every Voluntary School from one end of the country to the other, adjusting their mutual demands and satisfying their respective needs, the burden would be no doubt—I will not say more onerous than it could bear—but it would strain the machine very nearly to breaking point. What is the proper remedy? The remedy we have adopted—namely, to give every facility and every encouragement for the formation of these voluntary associations, by which association much valuable time will be saved, not only to Voluntary Schools composing the association, but to the Department responsible for the distribution of the grant among the associations. Let me repeat here in connection with association what I said on Monday—that it is inconceivable that the interests of the association and of the Department should not be identical. The association will have no other object than to keep the schools in existence and efficient, and that also is the object of the Department; therefore you are not calling into existence a body antagonistic to the Department; you are not cheating difficulties that may hamper the Department; you are calling into existence an association of persons every one of whose desires and interests fall into line with the general policy of the Bill. Association, whatever else it may do—and I hope it will do much for the schools—will give to the Department the advantage of advisers of the most disinterested character as to the needs of schools within their scope. I believe, therefore, as I said the other day, that the association part of the Bill, however much it may be attacked, is a part of the scheme from which I hope almost more than from any other part of it; and I trust that those who have to vote on the different stages of the Bill, will look to this part of the Bill with special care and impartiality; and I am convinced they will think that the Government have come to a wise conclusion in this matter, and that we ought to do everything we can where there is no Party involved to force schools into association, from which operation so much is to be hoped in the cause of both secular and religious education throughout the country. ["Hear, hear!"] I think there only remains, so far as I remember, to discuss in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman a theme he, following his predecessor, has developed at great length—I mean the comparative treatment of Board Schools and Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Gentleman fell foul of us on this Bench for saying there was no statutory equality between the schools in any sense relevant to this Debate before us. There is, of course, statutory equality between all public elementary schools with regard to distribution of grant, but there is not now, and there never has been since 1870, any other statutory equality whatever. [*Cheers.*] As my learned Friend pointed out on Tuesday, the very fact that one set of schools can and another set cannot draw on the purse of the ratepayers is in itself a distinction so far-reaching, so vital, that the idea of describing schools rate-aided and schools not rate-aided as being on an equality is really absolutely ludicrous. ["Hear, hear!"] That is not all; I have been taken to task by the late head of the Education Department, by the right hon. Gentleman who spoke to-night, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, by pointing out that Section 49 of the Act itself is absolutely inconsistent with the idea of statutory equality. All they can say or all they do say is "What you give under Section 97 to Board Schools is not a large amount." No, nor is it; but when you are discussing statutory equality what has the amount to do with the question? You have, as a matter of fact, had in existence ever since the passing of the Act of 1870 a clause by which poor Board Schools and Board Schools alone are assisted. You have submitted patiently to this inequality for 26 years, and yet you now utter these loud cries of indignation because, forsooth, we defer until the Voluntary School scheme is passed, a scheme dealing with poor Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] I cannot follow that reasoning at all. I may mention, in connection with the magnitude of the sum, it is a current fact that probably owing to our Bill of last year, and the attention called to Section 97 of the Act of 1870, the amount applied for and given to poor School Boards has doubled since last year. ["Hear, hear!"] A curious fact, showing that, at all events, Board Schools are alive to the circumstances and that they are not treated with statutory equality as compared with poor Voluntary Schools. There is another point clearly brought out in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman by anybody who takes the trouble to compare it with other speeches from that side, and notably with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Sir H. Fowler). Whenever Gentlemen opposite wish to embarrass Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House, who desire generally to relieve all poor schools, Board or Voluntary, they dwell solely on the fact that the Bill does not touch poor Board Schools; but when they deal with the broad question, then it appears—it appears, at least from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir H. Fowler)—that what they want is not equal treatment of poor schools, but equal treatment for all schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] Now upon what leg are you going to rest? [*Ministerial cheers.*] Which is the real policy of the Opposition? [*Cheers.*] Who speaks the voice of right hon. Gentlemen opposite—the Member for East Fife or the Member for Northampton? ["Hear, hear!"] The Member for East Fife (Mr. Asquith) says his view is you should give where necessity is shown to exist. The right hon. Gentleman(Sir H. Fowler) throws necessity absolutely on one side, and says—and many fragments of the speech of the late Minister for Education were in the same sense—that every public elementary school, be it Voluntary or be it Board School, be it rich or be it poor, be it in a state of destitution or be its coffers overflowing with money, all should be treated alike and treated in the same relation to an equal law; if you give 5s. to one you must give 5s. all through. That I admit is not the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife, but it was of many hon. Gentlemen who have spoken from the other side. It is vain for them to pretend that they have one single policy on the subject, when from voices of equal authority we have two views put forward of what ought to be done, irreconcilable and inconsistent. [*Cheers.*] I am unable to imagine a more scandalous waste of public money than that which would be involved in the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir H. Fowler). Knowing as we all know that the resources of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are not illimitable, knowing as we all know that schools, whether Board or Voluntary, which require assistance are very numerous, surely it would be a most scandalous misappropriation of public funds if we were to pursue that equal treatment which alternately with other policies animates the speeches from hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am unable to understand how they can come before the House as a united Party with a united policy, or defend a policy which has found so much support among their ranks. The right hon. Gentleman is of opinion that it would be altogether shocking to deal with the question of poor Voluntary Schools until you accept a Measure dealing with poor Board Schools. That is his policy, but it is not the policy of all his followers. Of course, I admit there is great analogy from some points of view between poor Board Schools and poor Voluntary Schools. I admit also, and I have always admitted, and I may say we are the first Government that ever did admit since 1870 that poor Board Schools ought to have relief. But, while there are fundamental resemblances between the two cases, there are also not unimportant divergencies. In the first place, I do not think the same machinery can be made to apply to the two cases. In the Bill of last year there was an attempt to do it, and not, I think, on the whole successful. When we propose, as I hope we shall, a Measure for poor Board Schools, of course it will not be on the lines of our Bill for poor Voluntary Schools, because association would have no place in the machinery of the one, while it is absolutely essential to the machinery of the other. ["Hear, hear!"] In the second place let me point out this—it is perhaps a small matter, but one not to be lost sight of—while the Government are pledged, and while our Party is pledged, and has been pledged ever since the General Election, to deal with poor Voluntary Schools, the question of poor Board Schools never came up in general discussion until we attempted to deal with it last year. While the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Acland) pursued that distinguished career at the Education Department which brought on his head the blessings of the Bishop of Chester, I never heard that the right hon. Member for Rotherham ever suggested during the last two years to his colleagues or to the House that anything whatever should be done for the poor Board Schools. [*Cheers.*] I believe you might hunt through the election speeches and addresses of hon. Gentlemen of this House, and, except in the special cases of one or two districts like West Ham, I do not believe you will find one single speech or address, until we brought in our Bill of last year, in which the subject of poor Board Schools is so much as alluded to. [*Cheers.*] But there is a third point in this connection which I think ought not to be lost sight of. In so far as our grant is what I may call an eleemosynary grant, I hold all who have equal needs should be equally assisted. [*Cheers.*] Let it be observed, when you are dealing with the case of Voluntary Schools, there is something over and above the eleemosynary aspect which has to be considered. I am not going to repeat, even if it only be in summary, the fact that, in my view, one great justification of this Bill, one of the greatest necessities which make it urgent to deal with this problem, is that the Act of 1870 can only be maintained and is only tolerable if and so long as it gives room within its limits both for the Board and the Voluntary system. [*Cheers.*] There is, therefore, underlying this Bill an even larger and deeper question of principle than is involved in the treatment of poor Board Schools. I, at all events, consider myself as contributing, to the best of my ability, to keep up a system which I grant is fettered with many difficulties and which is absolutely doomed to destruction, in my judgment, if you allow the Voluntary part of our educational system to go down. That, in my judgment, would be the greatest blow which this country could receive from the point of view of those who, like myself, believe in denominational teaching; but it would be a not less blow, believe me, to those who, like hon. Gentlemen opposite, regard it as an accursed thing. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, regard it as a thing so abominable that you may refuse to pay rates lest it should be carried out; a thing so abominable that you would be justified in breaking the law rather than see it carried into effect—that formulæ should be taught in Board Schools. Many have threatened to go to prison rather than pay for the support of schools in which formulæ are taught. I say that that part of the system which they cherish and which establishes undenominational Board Schools—the destruction of that system must follow the destruction, in my opinion, of the denominational Voluntary system in this country, and it is in the interest of Board and Voluntary Schools that this Bill is brought forward by Her Majesty's Government. [*Cheers.*] Therefore we have justification in this Bill going down to the very root of our educational system, and of even greater importance than those eleemosynary considerations which rightly animate us in our desire to assist poor Board Schools. The House will perceive that by rising, as I have done, immediately after the right hon. Gentleman, I have deprived myself of the luxury to which I confess I had looked forward, of speaking after the Leader of the Opposition at a later stage of the Debate. He will be able to explain, therefore, without power of reply on my part, what his view really is now with regard to the relief of ratepayers. [Sir W. HARCOURT made an observation which was inaudible in the Gallery.] Are not we to have the right hon. Gentleman's explanation? This is indeed a cruel disappointment. [*Laughter.*] If he and hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches are going to vote against us tonight, it is, as I understand from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, not because they object to help Voluntary Schools, but because they think it is so important to help the ratepayers of poor School Board districts that that object must be associated with the other object. I really am interested to know, and it is very important we should know, when this process of silent conversion took place in the right hon. Gentleman's mind. [*Laughter and cheers.*] His last speech explaining that all relief to the ratepayer was a dole to the landlord—[*laughter*]—was made, I think, in November. His first speech on the subject was that in which he explained that a Bill which had given these doles to the landlords ought not to be considered by this House. His first speech in the other direction was delivered by way of an interjection, I think, or, at any any rate, briefly delivered on the Address this year. That is to say, on January 19—a short space in which to make the curve, even by a most practised hand. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman, I have not the least doubt, will explain to us to-night that the unsuccessful election—unsuccessful from our point of view—is due to the country awakening to the fact that we are treating Voluntary Schools with a preference which we do not give to Board Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] The country was invoked in every speech of the right hon. Gentleman last year as holding with the conviction of which we should only understand the strength when the time of a General Election came near—with an unalterable conviction—that everything you gave to the ratepayer was a disguised, and scarcely disguised, gift to the landlord. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman is, perhaps, capable of holding these two contradictory doctrines at the same time, but surely the country is not so capable. [*Laughter.*] I should very much like to know whether the election to which I have referred was due to the recollection by the voters of the speeches which he made last year, or the anticipation by the voters of the speeches he is going to make this year? [*Laughter.*] It is really a matter of more than personal curiosity on my part. I admit the personal curiosity exists, but I think it is really a subject of some public moment to know whether the Party who cheered the right hon. Gentleman when he made and repeated his speeches last year on this subject were sincere in their convictions? [*Cheers.*] If they were sincere then, we should like to know whether they have altered their convictions, or if the convictions—exactly opposite convictions—which they now express are as sincere as those which they gave vent to last year. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): They are exactly the same.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The right hon. Gentleman says they are exactly the same.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Exactly.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Apparently it is right to relieve the landlord when the subject of relief is education, but it is not right to relieve the landlord when the subject of relief is the Poor Law—a doctrine of deep mystery, which it will require all the right hon. Gentleman's ingenuity, and all the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman the late Minister of Education to deal with when he replies to-night, as we are told he is going to. I have now, I think, kept the House sufficiently long, and have really traversed all the ground with which it is necessary to deal. I have, I hope, shown, in the first place, that the course of the Government has from first to last, ever since the dropping of the Bill of last year, been perfectly consistent. [*Cheers.*] I have shown, I hope, that there is no ground for thinking that Voluntary Schools have any reason to complain because we have found a method of dealing with this subject which does not give our opponents the Parliamentary advantage which a fixed date always does give to an ingenious Opposition. ["Hear, hear!"] I think I have also shown that the method of distribution to which the right hon. Gentleman objects is one which it is absolutely necessary we should adopt if the full benefit is to be extracted from this Measure; and, in the fourth place, I have shown that, pressing as the necessities of the poor School Board districts undoubtedly are, and anxious as we equally undoubtedly are to deal with them, the question of the Voluntary Schools has always been regarded as a separate question, and there are reasons why it still should be regarded as a separate question. ["Hear, hear!"] Finally, I have put a question to the Opposition, which I think demands an answer—namely, how it comes about that relief of the rates is legitimate when you are dealing with education, but illegitimate, monstrous, and mischievous class legislation when you are dealing with other rates? [*Cheers.*] These four propositions cover, I think, the whole field of Debate upon this Measure, and I hope, as I have attempted to deal with them fully, fairly, and candidly, that those who think we are not wrong in endeavouring to do our best, with the utmost speed, to help the Voluntary Schools, will give us at this stage, and all other stages of this Bill, that support which will not only insure its becoming law, but insure its becoming law at the earliest possible date. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington) observed that the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had referred to the accusations which had been brought against him of vacillation. They on that side had never made such an accusation, which, on the contrary, came from the great organs of the Unionist Party. *The Times*, the *Morning Post*, and the *Standard* had poured forth their diatribes morning after morning, calling for greater firmness on the part of the Government, under penalty of their supporters deserting them. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the criticisms that had been made as criticisms which, to impartial auditors, would be singularly inconclusive. Who were they who had made these criticisms? They were the followers of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not believe the objections of hon. Members on that side were more root and branch objections than some which had been brought forward from the other side. But at least they were objections that stood on their own footing. He did not wonder at the extent to which the Resolution had been debated. It proposed to take not a sum of money voted as part of the Estimates for a single year, but it was intended to be the foundation of a Bill which, if passed into law, could not be repealed without the consent of the House of Lords, and would impose on the Exchequer of the country a charge of £618,000 a year. That was equivalent to between twenty and thirty millions of National Debt. If on that side they were disposed to closely scrutinise the proposals for the application of this vast sum, surely it was not to be wondered at. With such a sum they could give to England such a provision for secondary education as existed in Scotland and, perhaps a better one, also the foundations of University education; it could be applied to the improvement even of the entire system of primary education in England. He should not have complained if the proposal of the First Lord of the Treasury had been simply to relieve necessitous schools all round, or if its application was to inure equally to the benefit of the two classes of necessitous schools, Voluntary and Board. He should not have complained if the proposal of the Government had been for the relief of Voluntary education generally. They came to the consideration of the matter in a freer spirit than used to be the case. They had left behind the days when the education controversy was simply one between Church and chapel. But there was one condition to which any proposal to establish an addition to the provision which already exists for education must be subject, efficiency in the kind of education provided must be the first thing looked at. When he remembered that this was a proposal to assist Voluntary Schools to carry out the lines of education that already existed, upon which Voluntary education was founded, that it was looked at askance by the whole teaching community, he could not help looking upon it with suspicion. The Government seemed to be very near interfering with the settlement of 1870. They were principles which should be carefully kept in mind in approaching the consideration of this Resolution. When Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870 brought in the Elementary Education Act of that year, they allowed three months to elapse between the Second Reading and the Committee stage, that the Bill might receive full consideration in the country. The main feature of the settlement of 1870 was that there should be compulsory education out of the rates, and under popular control. In those days they would not have dared to propose that there should be aid out of the rates without popular control. What was the policy of the next Government that had to deal with education. The Education Act of 1870 was founded on the strict observance by the Government of the day of what Liberal Members believed to be the foundation of the system. When the Minister of the Crown responsible brought in the Bill he said:—

> "The House would agree that it would be hazardous for any Government to attempt to reverse the policy which had received the formal approval of the country unless they had the strongest evidence that the national policy had undergone a great change. Now that the franchise had been lowered it would be most unwise to allow people to believe that there would be a general reversal of policy whenever there was a change of Government."

What chance had the present Government given the country of considering their education proposals? They were not foreshadowed or talked of at the time of the General Election, nor had the Government followed the course adopted in 1870 of allowing a large interval to elapse between the earlier and later stages of the Bill that the country might form an opinion upon it. Their

Bill seemed, in its essential features, to be inconsistent with and going back upon the Bill of 1870, and it had not received adequate consideration by those interested. In that Debate several interesting things had been made clear. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said any surplus in connection with the Bill would go to the reduction of the National Debt. The 31st March was not essential to the passing of the Bill, and the Bill was brought forward for next year and subsequent years. Then they knew that the 5s. to be allocated was not for necessitous schools, but is to be raised for the whole of the children in the Voluntary Schools, to be applied at the discretion of the Association of Voluntary Schools. This money might be used in a rather startling manner. It would be possible, according to this mode of allocation, to pay the whole cost of the upkeep of certain schools out of the money so raised. A school had first to declare itself necessitous, and the scheme of the Government would leave the question to the district association to apply the funds under its control in paying the whole cost of the maintenance of that Voluntary School. If in 1870 anyone had suggested that the whole cost of a Voluntary School should be defrayed out of Imperial taxes the Parties would have been astonished at the departure their successors were taking, without appearing to realise that it was a remarkable departure from the principles of the settlement of 1870. This being the general character of the proposals of the Government why did they not let the House have some inkling of what was to be the rest of their scheme. Why did they not bring forward their scheme for aiding necessitous schools in a form which would enable them to judge of their educational proposals as a whole. There would be no difficulty in bringing in two Resolutions, and they need not be brought in at the same time. He agreed entirely in the criticism of *The Times* that—

> "it is essential to the advocates of their (the Government's) proposals that they should be what we know they are not, proposals meant to deal with the surplus of the existing year."

The Government were going to put a very large sum of money for ever in the hands of these associations, which were to advise the Education Department. He expected that the advice of the associations would guide the Department much as the advice of Her Majesty's Ministers guided Her Majesty in connection with the laws which she was supposed to enact. It was impossible for the Department to look into all matters itself, and it would not do so. If the Government really desired to assist Denominational Schools in some fashion which should be consistent with the manner in which this question had been dealt with for the last 25 years, why did they not adopt some other plan? Reference had more than once been made to Scotland, where there was Denominational education. It was true that Denominational teaching was given in Scottish schools, and that for Scotland there was no clause analogous to the Cowper-Temple Clause. But it was also true that the whole of that education was given under the control of the ratepayers. There was no school which received any large amount of State aid which was not under the direct control of a School Board. The School Board system was universal. If the Government meant what they said about Denominational education, why did they not try that Scottish system which they were always invoking? [The First Lord of the Treasury: "Hear, hear!"] Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that now, at the eleventh hour, he was prepared to put the assistance which was to be given to the Board Schools under the control of the representatives of the localities? He confessed that if the right hon. Member had adopted the Scottish system with its universal control over the schools, with the ratepayers electing their School Board in every parish and carefully controlling the Denominational education that was given, he for one would have approached the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals in a very different spirit. The Denominational system in Scotland did not work badly. What he and his Friends contended for was that the interests of education should be put first, whether there were Denominational Schools or not, and what they protested against was that church or chapel should be able to dominate the school, as if the school existed for the sake of the church or chapel, instead of for the purpose of education. If the Government would make it clear that school education must be the first consideration, and that the judges in the matter must not be the Clergy but the public concerned in the various localities, he should approach the consideration of the question in a very different way. They did not desire in Scotland to enlarge the power of the Clergy. They did not wish the Clergy to have a greater part than they had now in the management of schools, and they looked with a very cold eye upon a proposal to set aside a large sum out of taxes which were contributed by Scotland as well as England, for the purpose of setting up a system which was contrary to their principles. Not the least discovery which the Scottish Members had made in the course of that discussion was that there was to be no equivalent grant to Scotland. When this enormous sum of £618,000 a year was to be given to English schools in perpetuity, surely Scotland and Ireland deserved some consideration. Hitherto, as far as he was aware, whenever money had been allocated by the Government for education, the doctrine of equivalence had been in principle adhered to. But now, not only were they told that there was to be no recognition of that principle, but such comfort as was offered to them was given in a form in which it did not benefit them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the Government meant to do something for primary education in Scotland, but the Scottish Members did not desire that the money which Scotland was to have should be spent on primary education; for Scottish primary education was in a condition in which it did not require further subsidies. When last year the Government gave Scotland the equivalent grants for—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is entitled to use the argument that he objects to this Vote, because nothing has been said about an equivalent grant for Scotland, but he cannot go beyond that.

*MR. HALDANE said that the strong objection which he, as a Scotch Member, had to this Resolution, was that there was no equivalent grant, and that the only promise which had been held out to them was a promise to do something for elementary education, which they did not want. They had their own views with regard to secondary education, but those views the Chancellor of the Exchequer knocked on the head. He supposed that Scotland was a country which the Government did not care much to consider. The Government was not representative of Scotland. He was not aware that the Tory Party had ever had a majority in Scotland, and there was no sign at present that Scotland intended to form a new Conservative alliance. He took it, therefore, that they had little to expect on that occasion. Not only as a Scotch Member, but as one who was keenly interested in the educational system of this country, he deplored the course upon which the Government were entering. There were other alternatives open to them, alternatives which would not have shaken the compact which was come to in 1870, and from which Lord Sandon, in 1876, intimated it was not the intention of the Tory Party to depart. The Government might carry this Bill, but they would not carry public opinion with them. They were advocating a course for which they obtained no authority at the last General Election, and for which, if one might judge from the most recent elections, they had no authority from the country to-day. Let them take warning from the fate of some of their predecessors. In 1868 Mr. Gladstone came into power with a magnificent majority. The compromise which he effected in 1870 enabled him to carry his Bill, but in the end he wrecked his Government. There was nothing that sapped and destroyed the strength of an administration so much as tampering with the principles of the people upon the subject of education. In the interests of peace now and hereafter, for the sake of avoiding bitter strife and pain, he urged the Government to follow the advice of some of their own supporters, and to bring forward, whilst it was not yet too late, their education scheme in a form which would render it possible for the House to judge of it as a whole.

*COLONEL R. WILLIAMS (Dorset, W.) said that there was a fallacy underlying all the greater portion of the discussion, and that was the treatment of this Motion as if it dealt with education (whether given in Board or Voluntary Schools), and was not rather an attempt to apportion fairly the cost of that education. Until 1870, the national contribution to education was given by payment for results, which was all that the State did as such. All school buildings and appliances were left to be provided by those who would, and the friends of religious education practically did all that was required. But in 1870 the nation awoke to the fact that education was something which concerned everybody, and ought not to be left, as it was, to a section of the nation only—namely, to those keenly interested in teaching religion —and it was to bring home that responsibility to all that the Board system was established among us. By a compromise which he for one much regretted, and the result of which he thought was not foreseen, the religious teaching in those schools was made entirely undenominational; and, therefore, the support of the Voluntary system became the bounden duty of those who believed in denominational teaching. He did for one, and he believed that everyone in his heart to whom his religion was a reality, believed in denominational teaching, and the real secret of the cry for undenominational teaching was a fear that they should be taught anything else. Then why not give the parents the right to choose the religion of their own children? The friends of definite religious education had supported their Voluntary Schools. They had been content to do so, realising that was the price they had to pay for the privilege of having their children taught what they themselves believed. But since 1870 the conception of what education ought to be had grown enormously, and rightly, and with that increased conception the cost of education had also very largely increased and rightly grown, and no one who knew imputed to friends of Voluntary Schools any diminution in zeal or any want of knowledge of the real problems of education. Very much the contrary. In 1870 there were four sources of income—namely, school fees, Government grant, the rates, and voluntary subscriptions. The school fees had been practically swept away; the Government grant, the rates, and the subscriptions alone remained. The Government grant was paid, as earned, to all schools alike, but the rates and subscriptions came out of the pockets of the people; rates from those in School Board districts, subscriptions from those in non-School Board districts, as well as many who pay both rates and subscriptions. They might ask whether the price demanded from the friends of religious education was not too high, and whether it was fair that the nation should go on as it was doing, raising the price which it asked the friends of denominational education to pay for the privilege to which they were entitled. Was it not rather the truest justice to say to the friends of religious education—

> "You have paid enough for the privilege, and as in School Board districts you pay a double charge—and in non-School Board districts you cannot make those pay who differ from you and who are careless as to their responsibilities in educating their children—is it not right that the State should make out of the taxes some part of the increased taxation which the State is levying?"

He had supported the Bill of last year, but now, when it was too late, when the Bill had been quietly thought over without the blinding dust of party strife, they heard from a very important Member of the Opposition that the Bill had many good clauses which would have done much for education. The Bill, however, had been lost. It had been treated to a feast of Heliogabalus, in the shape of a lengthened Second Reading Debate, and also in the magnificence of the great majority by which it was carried; but, like the guests at that feast of old, it was smothered, not under a shower of rose leaves, but under a shower of Amendments. The Opposition had now the chance of rising above party spirit, and of saying that it would confer great benefits on our educational system, while exercising their right of criticism and doing their best to improve this Measure. He thought that on the Opposition rested the responsibility of having thrown back the cause of the improvement of our education for some years, and for having also made it more difficult, for the longer the saw of contention is drawn the hotter it grows. The House had heard something about givng relief to the landlord and to those who paid subscriptions. He did not think this was the case. The Measure would give relief to those in scattered and lonely country parishes, with no one to help them, and to those in overcrowded town parishes who were strivng to live as best they could among their people, on a miserable pittance, spending much time which should have been given to their purely spiritual work, in begging and scraping together the necessary funds from friends at a distance. It would enable these people to keep their schools going, in order that they might teach religious education as the first thing. He believed that the quality of the secular education in the Voluntary Schools was quite as good as that given in the best Board Schools, as far as their means would permit. The educational spirit was just as keen in denominational schools, and he supported the Bill because he saw in it great possibilities for the future, and because he believed it to be just.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said the hon. Member forgot that the Bill shadowed forth by the Leader of the House this year, and to which this Resolution was a preparation, had not provided for denominational teaching at all except in the case of two or three sects. Last year's Bill gave parents the right of choosing even in Church of England Schools whether the particular dogmas of their own Church should be taught. But no such provision, so far as the House was informed, was to be incorporated in the Bill of this year, and the objection of those who opposed the Bill was that all the taxpayers of the country were to be called upon to still further than at present maintain schools chiefly for the Church of England and for the Roman Catholics, where the dogmas of those churches alone were to be taught, to whatever church the parents might belong. There was in this country an immense number of districts where the only school was that of the Church of England. He believed there were 8,000 parishes where no school at all was found except that of the Church of England; and yet the hon. Member argued in favour of the inalienable right of the parent to fix on the definite religious teaching to be taught to the child. The Leader of the House said that evening that he desired to introduce this Bill as much in the interests of the Board Schools as in the interests of the Voluntary Schools. But the House remembered what the right hon. Gentleman said last year—that all Board Schools should be extinguished in this country.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I did not say that.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS said the House at least recollected the phrase used in the Debates last year by the right hon. Gentleman, when he expressed the pious hope that School Boards would gradually become extinct, and any other explanation than that he had indicated had not been found. The Government, however, had taken a very curious way of putting their desire to benefit both classes of schools into effect. It was a curious way to support Board Schools by bringing in a Bill which did not do anything for them at all, but which gave what was asked for the Voluntary Schools. And they gave the 5s. as a grant, not to the necessitous schools alone, but as a sum per head of the full number of children in average attendance at the Denominational Schools. Now what they asked was that if the Government took the average attendance in the whole of the denominational schools of the country, however ample their funds or big their subscriptions or endowments, as the basis of calculation they ought to take the same basis in the case of the Board Schools. He had no doubt they would be told by the Leader of the House if the Voluntary Schools Bill passed this Session, "Now if you do not bring such and such a discussion to a close remember the Board Schools will have nothing this Session." ["Hear, hear!" from the FIRST LORD of the TREASURY.] Indeed, he had great doubts whether the right hon. Gentleman would not desire to see protracted the Debates on other Bills in order that he might have the opportunity of withholding a Bill which he did not very much desire to see passed. ["Oh!"] The Opposition had a right to be sceptical as to the desires of the Government in regard to Board Schools. But in his opinion the opposition to this Bill had been put upon too narrow a ground. The Opposition had proceeded chiefly upon the ground that it was unfair to go on with the Bill for assisting denominational schools unless the Government were at the same time going on with the Bill for the necessitous Board Schools. For himself, he objected to the principle of the Bill, root and branch, whatever might be done with the Board Schools. The Bill was nothing less than an unblushing attempt to endow one form of religion in this country. He desired to consider the Bill, further, from the Welsh point of view. In Wales they were much nearer the attainment of universal School Boards than any other portion of the United Kingdom. In England there were many more children, he believed, in the denominational schools than in the Board Schools; in Wales the case was very different. In Wales, including Monmouth, the total population under School Boards was 1,428,000, while the total population of Wales and Monmouth in 1891 was 1,771,000, so that the population under School Boards was over 80 per cent. of the whole population of the Principality. The average attendance in the Voluntary Schools in Wales, according to the 1894 Return, was 98,829, and in the Board Schools 149,435. Now according to the average attendance, they had under the Bill a very considerable sum given to the Principality in aid of the Voluntary Schools, which were in the minority he had just stated. The sum would be £24,700 a year. Was it fair that in a country which, though poor in comparison with England, had supported its own education in large measure, had set up School Boards over such a large proportion of its area, so large a sum should be given to schools which taught the denominational teaching of the Church of England, and certainly the Church of the minority, while they gave nothing at all to the Board Schools? The number of necessitious Board Schools in Wales, at the same time, was larger in proportion than in England. If the 5s. grant were given to necessitous Board Schools alone—not taking the average attendance of all the Board Schools—Wales would be entitled to £20,705 per annum. Yet they were given not one penny, and a bigger sum was given to the support of the Voluntary Schools. And there was no security whatever that the subscriptions to the Voluntary Schools should be kept up. In fact, the Government were offering special encouragement for the abandonment of those subscriptions. These schools were called Voluntary Schools, but they were not Voluntary Schools in any sense. He could give endless figures to show that they were supported out of public moneys, although of course, they were under private and clerical management. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Who built them?"] In many cases they were built by subscriptions from the general population. [*Cheers.*] He could give the case of one school which was built and maintained in large measure out of the earnings of workmen, who worked in collieries belonging to Church people. That was a school which he had once attended himself. The average attendance at the school, according to the 1894 return, was about 800. What were the voluntary subscriptions now? £15 a year, representing the munificent voluntary subscription of 4½d. per child! In that case the school was practically maintained out of public money, and was ruled by a clergyman who was an ardent Churchman, and the House might take it from him that there had not been a pupil teacher in that school, whether he came from Nonconformist parents or not, who was not forced by the clergyman to go to the Church of England. During the last few years the people in the locality had built a Board School for themselves, and yet the result of the Bill would be that an additional £200 or £300 a year would be given to the clerical manager of the Church School, to which the people who had built schools for themselves would have to contribute. There was a parish in Glamorganshire called Ystrad in which the Board Schools were general, their average attendance being 10,447. There was only one Voluntary School, which had an attendance of 53. Was it fair that the people who already supported the Board Schools should have to contribute to an extra grant to the one Voluntary School? The same state of things obtained all over Glamorganshire. The total attendance in Voluntary Schools was 30,046 as compared with 71,310 in Board Schools. Therefore, as far as Wales was concerned, the injustice of the Bill would be more severe than in other parts of the country. It was said that last year the Opposition professed a willingness to help denominational schools. Whatever may have been stated by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench, he and his friends did not wish to aid such schools unless they were put under effective popular control. This Bill was not conceived in the interests of education at all, but chiefly in the interests of one denomination. What security was there that the money voted under the Bill would go to further the interests of true education? None. There was no assurance that the teachers should be enabled to give their whole attention to educational interests, or that they should be selected and dismissed on educational grounds alone. In the last number of the *Westminster Review* there was an article by Mr. Macnamara, President of the Teachers' Association, showing what teachers had had to submit to at the hands of clerical managers. A number of advertisements were quoted, of which the following is a specimen:—

> "Wanted. Certificated master, with wife for infants; mixed National School; organist, zealous communicant. Salary £107, house and garden."

A table given in the article set out the duties which the teachers were often called upon to perform. These included the duties of organist, choir-master, parish clerk, Sunday School superintendent and teacher, bell-ringer, clerk to the County Council, postmaster, and secretary of the cricket club. Was it right to ask Parliament to vote £600,000 a year, as a minimum, to schools in which education was only one consideration. The Welsh Members were determined that this Measure should not pass without every effort being made to point out how unfair would be its operation, and to expose the motives with which it had been brought in.

*MR. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) said that the hon. Gentleman had based his opposition to the Bill on grounds which might be satisfactory to himself, but which the House would regard as irrelevant. When the hon. Member saw the Bill and found that Voluntary Schools were not to be placed under popular control—as he himself hoped they would not be—it would be time for him to complain. He wished to tender to Her Majesty's Government his warm, hearty, and unqualified thanks for having promised a Bill which would enable him to redeem the foremost and most binding engagement he had made with his constituents—an engagement made in 1891, before he became a Member. As to these proposals not representing public opinion, he would refer to the statement of the Secretary for the Colonies that there was not a single Member of the Unionist side who did not in a great measure owe his return to his undertaking to defer to the overwhelming sentiment of the country in favour of justice for the Voluntary Schools. Last year the Leaders of the Opposition denounced the then Education Bill because it was not a simple Measure for relieving Voluntary Schools; and in the speech of the late Home Secretary last year there was not a single reference to any desire to assist Board Schools. For his own part he desired to see precedence given to the claim of the Voluntary Schools. He had never been an enemy of Board Schools; he was their friend; and in that capacity he wished to express his conviction that the Board Schools could not exist, at any rate on the present lines, unless the Voluntary Schools were flourishing. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton in his powerful speech the other day, declared that the lamentations over the languishing condition of the Voluntary Schools were wholly groundless. The reason advanced for that assertion, coming as it did from a right hon. Gentleman remarkable for his practical and business qualities was certainly startling. The right hon. Gentleman asserted that the income of the Voluntary Schools had enormously increased. And why?—forsooth, because their expenditure had enormously increased. There were now two and a half millions of children attending the Voluntary Schools as compared with 1,200,000 in 1870, and because their expenditure had thereby increased the right hon. Gentleman jumped to the conclusion that their income had enormously increased. No doubt the income of the Voluntary Schools had increased, but why and how? Because the fervour and ardour of the convictions which permeated those who desired and required the existence of those schools led to their doubling and quadrupling their subscriptions. A great deal had been said in the course of the Debate by hon. Members on the other side in favour of what was called "statutory equality." But equality between Board and Voluntary Schools must be something else besides statutory. It must be real. There was no equality, statutory or otherwise between them at present. The Board Schools had the boundless resources of the rates to fall back upon, while the Voluntary Schools had nothing to rely upon but the small favours the Government gave them. He was very grateful to the Government for having given the Voluntary Schools the extra shilling. It would be accepted as a generous compensation for the disappointed expectation that the schools would get the grant during the current financial year. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Rotherham, in his speech attacking the proposals of the Government, taunted the London Members with the fact that London would get £40,000 less than Lancashire. But later on the right hon. Gentleman was indignant because the Voluntary Schools in Southwark would be exempted from rates to the amount of 1s. 6d. per child. It was, "Why should London get 1s. 6d. per child?" at the end of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, and "Why should London not have as much as Lancashire?" at the beginning of the speech. The details of the proposals of the Government would not lie before the House until the Bill was printed; but so far as he understood, he thanked the Government for them, and he specially thanked his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury for his determination to push the Bill through the House with all the speed he could command. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. F. A. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) thought the Party opposite were to be congratulated on the Leader they had in the First Lord of the Treasury. [*Ministerial cheers.*] After the signals of distress which had been hung out by the Solicitor General and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Dartford division in the previous discussions, he could not help admiring the thorough pluck, skill, and admirable argumentative powers with which the First Lord of the Treasury had attempted to defend a fortress already crumbling to ruin, and from which he knew full well he would be ignominiously driven in the course of a few weeks. [*Ministerial cries of* "No, no," *and Opposition cheers.*] One of the chief cries which the Prime Minister, the First Lord of the Treasury, and other leading members of the Conservative Party had used in the country was the cry of the enormous pressure of the School Board rate upon the unfortunate ratepayers of the country, but the proposals of the Government were an ingenious attempt to escape from the task of delivering the ratepayers from this burden. The First Lord of the Treasury complained of the protest made on the Opposition side of the House against the discriminating injustice as between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools. But he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that even the scheme adopted by the Bishops in the autumn, which the right hon. Gentleman had so contemptuously rejected at Manchester, would have given a grant of 6s. per head all round to Board Schools as well as to Voluntary Schools. It seemed to him that the proposals of the Government were evasive, and, in a certain sense, cowardly, and had reasonably disappointed everyone who was interested in the question of education. The supporters of the Voluntary Schools had expected to get during the current financial year the £120,000 which the Chancellor of the Exchequer held out to them last Session as certain to come into their treasury. The Supplementary Estimates showed where that £120,000 had gone. The Government, finding that they were condemned to make good the sum of £500,000 spent on that gigantic folly the Soudan Expedition, had appropriated the £120,000 which they offered last year to the Voluntary Schools. He should never consent to the scheme adopted by the National Society, but he should say at least for them that they had the courage of their convictions. They had presented a consecutive and comprehensive plan for the maintenance of the Voluntary Schools. But everyone knew that the relief to be given by this Bill would be but temporary, and that the evil day for the Voluntary Schools was but postponed. Several hon. Members on the other side of the House had referred to the injustice done to the supporters of Voluntary Schools in compelling them to pay School Board rates. He referred those hon. Gentlemen to the present Archbishop of Canterbury.

He said there was nothing in the point that those who subscribed to Voluntary Schools were unjustly treated because they also paid rates for the Board Schools, and that that was a necessary sacrifice in order to maintain the voluntary principle. Every addition to local charges placed upon the taxes was a transfer of burdens from the rich to the poor, and in effect the Government were asking the poorest class of the ratepayers to contribute through the taxes a large proportion of this aid to the Voluntary Schools. These proposals evaded the pledges given to the Church, the duty of the Government to the Board Schools, and the rights of parents. The Solicitor General had based his case on the claims of the parents, but what voice would the parents have in the appointment of these associations, their management or control, or the distribution of this sum of money? The right hon. Member for Fife in his able speech had repeated two of the conditions he laid down last year on which fresh grants to Voluntary Schools could be approved, but had omitted the third and most important—that there should be local representative control. The friends of National Education, too, were disappointed. These associations were self-appointed, irresponsible bodies, and probably the sum to be distributed would be allocated in large blocks, some to Cardinal Vaughan, and some to men like the Bishop of Chester, Mr. Riley, and to groups of those extremists who had been pushing forward this legislation. There was no guarantee of administrative educational reforms. By the activity of local managers at present, they might have good work done in isolated parishes, but under this system they were going to hand over to an irresponsible body the power of allocating money at their pleasure. The power of withholding the grant, if a school belonging to a certain religious body did not join the association of that body, was one of the most iniquitous proposals ever put forward in that House. The whole scheme was a blow to local Government, and was a serious injury to the cause of education, as it did away with the control even of local public opinion. The strongest reason he had for opposing these proposals was because the issue was put clearly before them whether they would maintain the Voluntary system as an independent and integral part of the educational system of the country. He thought the time had come for some Statesman, on one side or other of the House, to introduce one simple national system of schools in this country, so that the present miserable strife for personal and sectional objects, which was one of the greatest obstacles to education, might cease. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester had spoken of the Act of 1870 as no settlement, but as the starting of an educational civil war. He took it that the present question was whether they really wished to supply fuel to feed the flames of this perpetual struggle between two sets of citizens carrying on schools pitted against each other in a sort of educational cockpit; or whether they wished to use the funds of the country for the purpose of providing means for one educational system which would solve all these difficulties? Canon Bury had said that the Voluntary system was one of the greatest obstacles to educational progress, that wherever it excluded the Board Schools in the large towns education was starved, that the struggle was not for religious but for denominational education, the result of which, from a Churchman's point of view, was microscopic. "They could not make Churchmen in the national schools, and they had no right to do so in schools supported by public money." He challenged the right of any Government in the interests of education to provide money for Voluntary Schools on their present footing. There was an interesting rural conference held the other day by the Union of Teachers, at which the actual facts of the rural situation were brought forward in all their ghastly reality. He thought of the miserably starved village schools in his own county, and how the educational standard had been kept down, the teachers degraded, and every educational opportunity restricted by the selfish pertinacity of the Clergy in retaining their domination. It was said that Voluntary Schools were wanted by the country, but in his own division several towns had complained that they wanted their Board Schools enlarged, but the Education Department had refused permission to enlarge them, although they were crowded with children, and others sought admission. That was due to the fact that there were half disused Voluntary Schools in the parish into which the children had to be forced. In Yorkshire and Lancashire the Education Department actually had to force the children of Protestants who required free places into Roman Catholic Schools. The actual preference of the people in large towns for Board Schools had been demonstrated in one of the Reviews by figures as to the Voluntary Schools of a large town in the North by the Bishop of Ripon. Although the managers had clearly made efforts to bring up the Voluntary Schools to the standard required, that feeling was not sufficiently strong to enable them to raise the comparatively small sum still necessary to put them on an equality with Board Schools, while 5,000 children had been transferred to the Board Schools. The parents clearly preferred the most efficient schools, and did not care so much about their denominational character. This was a question of the interests of the children, and not of the sects. The Board School system existed in order to turn out well educated and capable citizens, while the Voluntary School system, by the admission of its own supporters, existed in order to form a bulwark round the Church of England, to provide a sort of hot-house for Church principles, to enrol fresh members of the Church. He was a Churchman, and wished to support all good Church work. He thought many of the clergy used the powers they had under the Education Acts in a most excellent and admirable manner in the interests of the children, but he maintained that religious interests ought to be provided for by the Church, and out of the pockets of Churchmen. He desired to ask any fair-minded man opposite two practical questions, namely, whether two struggling and insufficiently equipped schools could do as good work as one thoroughly equipped school into which all efforts were thrown, or whether the same sum of money when distributed over a large area and amongst small buildings with inferior staffs would produce anything like the same results as it would when concentrated upon one effectively equipped school. He passed a part of the last Recess in visiting some of the splendid common schools in the State of Massachusetts. He wished we could have in this country an educational system such as he saw there. Those magnificent and perfectly equipped elementary and technical and high schools were absolutely free to all children from five to 21 years of age. But what he wished to point out was that the tendency there at the present time was to close, both in town and country, the isolated and smaller schools, and to concentrate resources and efforts on large schools. The cost of conveying to the larger schools was actually being defrayed by the State. It was found better economy to give the children the full advantages of large schools, with numerous class-rooms and full equipment, and the stimulus of competition. He was assured that in the town in which the system was carried on the most effectively the Roman Catholics had given up, as a hopeless affair, the attempt to establish any parochial, or, in other words, denominational schools of their own, because the Catholic population would not withdraw their children from the splendid advantages given by the common school system. Why was it that here in England we could not have a system of that kind, which brought the highest advantages of education to every child? Why should the interests of the children in England be sacrificed, because of the squabbles between Churchmen and Dissenters, Catholics and Protestants? He regarded with suspicion the present proposals when he saw that distinguished prelates had said they could not trust teachers even from the training colleges if they had happened to go through the mill of the Board Schools. That was an indication of the spirit of excessive domination of private and irresponsible clerical bodies. Why should they not even now face the real question of National Education? He had had the curiosity to turn to the columns of *The Times* of 1870 to see what was said at the time. He would not weary the House by quoting an article in *The Times* on an Amendment which was moved by Mr. Walter during the passing of the Education Act of 1870, but he recommended hon. Members on the Government Benches to refer to that article. They would then see how, at the opening of this controversy, generous and broad were the views of even a newspaper like *The Times*. The proposal of Mr. Walter was that there should be universal School Boards, and that the way should be open to Voluntary Schools to merge themselves as regarded their secular teaching and retain religious teaching in their own hands. He asked the Government whether the door was still shut to some compromise which would lead us to a happy and ideal system. Were we to go on for ever piling up enormous expenses on one side and the other in maintaining the dual system? It was now suggested to give to the Voluntary Schools £616,000 in addition to what they now received. Two or three years hence there would be a high standard of education, Voluntary Schools would have increased in number, and Parliament would be asked for another million of money. By an absolute reversal of that common-sense policy of concentration which was making the State of Massachusetts such a paradise of education, the money here would be dissipated in all sorts of channels, in ineffectual education, and 10 or 20 years hence they would have to do the work which he asked the House of Commons to do now. Why not at once weed out the unnecessary schools in our towns and villages, and concentrate every effort on schools from which sectarian bigotry and conflict should be for ever removed?

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham) said few things had been more interesting, and, perhaps, more instructive, during these Debates than the anxiety of Members on the other side of the House to support some measure of relief for Voluntary Schools, to support this Measure indeed, if it could be altered in some slight and trivial degree to meet their own views and wishes. Curiously enough, though there was little desire among those hon. Members to support this Resolution, there was, with the exception of the hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan and the hon. Member who addressed the House last, not a single Member who found fault with the Resolution root and branch. He would not follow all the objections of the hon. Member who had last spoken, and who seemed to be rather like Martha—careful and troubled about many things. As to the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan, his complaint seemed simply to lie in this, that a large quantity of the money to be allocated to the relief of Voluntary Schools would go to the relief of Church Voluntary Schools, and to one particular Church school, where he was educated, and of the excellence of the education given in which, as well as of its unsectarian character, he was one of the best proofs. He did not propose to enter into the details of the proposal, for it seemed to him to be unbusinesslike to discuss the details of a measure not at present before the House; but he might be allowed to say he did not think there would be any finality in dealing with the question, and he did not think they would have even the elements of finality until a clear and distinct dividing line was drawn between the elementary education every parent had a right to demand for his child, and secondary or technical education. He believed that until this line was drawn they would not have the elements of finality. The present proposal allocated a sum for the relief of Voluntary Schools, and did that in fulfilment of pledges given very largely last autumn—pledges which, indeed, seemed to be somewhat in the nature of Jephtha's vow. In spite of the very serious warning addressed to Members on that side of the House by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Hart Dyke), and at the risk of adding to those disquieting phenomena which caused so much anxiety to his mind, he could not but say that he deeply regretted that the Government had not found it possible to introduce concurrently with this proposal some proposal for the relief of necessitous Board Schools. This he said as one absolutely unpledged one way or the other on the subject, and he said it as representing a constituency in which a very large majority of the schools were Voluntary Schools, many of them poor schools, and greatly needing the relief now proposed to be given. But, at the same time he could not be indifferent to the fact that there were—it might be a small number only, but still there were—a number of School Boards within the constituency the pressure of whose rate was extremely high, and the highest rate of all fell upon one of the poorest agricultural parishes in the whole district.

["Hear, hear!"] The average rate was 8d. in the £, but the rate in this particular parish was 1s. 1½d. He could not help contrasting this with the Voluntary School rate which he paid in respect to his occupation in another parish, which Voluntary rate was 1d. in the £. It was a school practically without subscriptions—a Voluntary School supported by a voluntary rate of 1d. in the £. He should very deeply regret to have to go and tell his constituents that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to vote for the relief of Voluntary Schools and yet they were not prepared to grant relief to poor Board Schools. The House had been told it was the full intention of the Government to deal with this question, and he would give them every credit for a sincere determination to do so, but he very much regretted that they could not go beyond intentions. He heartily wished Her Majesty's Government had been able to lay on the Table a proposal that would give the House some more definite assurance than any yet given that the Government intended to deal with the case of poor School Boards, particularly in rural districts, where the rates pressed with extreme severity upon the ratepayers. Feeling strongly on the subject, and entertaining these views, he was not able to support Her Majesty's Government on the main question the other night. He could not vote against them, for he would not be a party to withholding relief from Voluntary Schools greatly in need of it, but at the same time he could not vote with the Government, for he felt that the relief should be given, if possible, concurrently, and certainly almost immediately with that relief to poor School Boards. He still felt that as strongly as ever, but he recognised that if he voted against Her Majesty's Government on this occasion he would be playing into the hands of those who wished to delay or defeat this Measure, and not only so, but it might delay, or possibly defeat altogether, the expected relief to poor Board Schools. He believed Her Majesty's Government would take the earliest opportunity of redeeming pledges given to deal with the case of the poorer School Boards, and in this belief he would record his vote for the Government that night.

*Mr. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) felt very strongly in favour of assistance to Board Schools, and he did not limit himself by any means to what were called necessitous Board Schools; he would put in a plea for contributions to all Board Schools, both urban and rural. There were many towns where the school rate pressed heavily on the ratepayers, in conjunction with sanitary and other rates. In Leicester the School Board provided for the education of some 25,000 children, and there were two Board scholars for every scholar in a Voluntary School, and yet these Voluntary Schools would receive 5s. a head grant and the Board Schools nothing whatever, the ratepayers continuing to pay 14d. in the £, and in addition they would be called upon to pay their share of the taxation out of which this grant was made to Voluntary Schools. On the face of it this was a manifest injustice. The trade of Leicester was good, but it had to be sustained against severe foreign competition. The incomes of the workmen were but moderate, and it was hard upon them to be called to pay their proportion to the maintenace of schools in which they were not concerned, paying at the same time high rates for the education of their own children. He would deal with the rural schools. He was Chairman of a Parish Council in a village where they had a Voluntary School which belonged to a very rich and powerful family. The children from the adjoining village attended the school, the owner of the second village being also a rich man. In the village itself lived a Peer, who was a Member of the other House, and the school was surrounded on all sides by rich people, who were quite capable of maintaining it. He had also within his knowledge three Board Schools, all providing for rural populations, chiefly the children of agricultural labourers. Where they were situated there was not a single rich man or any that paid, or could pay, more than another. The whole of the rates had to be extracted from the pockets of the village tradesmen and labourers who, although they did not pay rates directly paid them by way of rent. These were the class of people charged with the maintenance of the Board Schools. By this Resolution they were going to give to the rich Voluntary School 5s. per head of the children in attendance, whilst the poor Board Schools in the agricultural villages of Norfolk, which were kept up with the greatest difficulty, were not to receive a single penny. Surely that was an evident injustice. He thought it a most unfortunate thing that a great question like that of education should be tinkered with by this piecemeal kind of legislation, this sort of Jack-of-all-trades policy, and master of none. If the Government had had the patience to wait so that they might have dealt with the whole subject at once, and given proportionate relief to all classes of schools, they would have found considerable support and encouragement from a number of hon. Members who were now forced by the circumstances to oppose the Government's present mode of procedure. As to the machinery they were to have what were called associations of Board Schools. In plain language, he understood that to be a federation of rectors, and if any school refused to associate with this federation of the vicars, the Education Department would be enabled to refuse to give that school any assistance from the grant. Suppose a Nonconformist School did not see its way to federate with Church of England and Catholic Schools, the Education Department would then be able to bring intolerable coercion to bear, and could refuse to give such a school a proportion of this money provided by Parliament.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood the provision. We provide that a school shall be considered to have a reasonable ground for objecting to come into an association if the majority of the schools in that association belong to another religious denomination.

*MR. BROADHURST remarked that at any rate power was placed in the hands of the Education Department to deal with a possible Nonconformist School, a power which he entirely objected to unless the school for quite insufficient reasons—not based upon religious objections—refused to join, and purposely caused difficulty and trouble in the administration in this Bill. His fear was that these differences would not be necessary to the degree he had suggested, for the purpose of debarring certain schools from participation in their fair share of the national grant. The only other point with regard to the machinery was this: That the membership of the association of schools was to be composed entirely of the present managers and proprietors of these schools, and there was to be no elected representative of any kind whatever. That was the centre and pillar of their objection to the whole position. The Government were going to provide £600,000 a year, a sum which would probably be increased annually by a very large amount, and this money was to be allotted by people in all parts of the country who represented nobody except themselves, their prejudices and their own religious bigotry. This sum was to be placed in the hands of people without being subject to any control whatever. He could not look upon it in any other aspect than as a great system of additional endowment to the Church of England. They were going to give Clergymen and those who managed the rural and urban Voluntary Schools at the present time a far greater and more influential position than they now held. He entirely objected to voting money on these principles. He would suggest that the Government should follow the traditions which had hitherto invariably been followed when two Bills were to be devoted to the same subject, and that was to let the two Measures be dealt with at the same time. When this Bill had been read a Second time, and before the Committee stage was reached, let the Government bring in and explain to the House their whole scheme with regard to the proposed relief of the Board Schools. There could be no denying the fact that the people of West Ham, Walthamstow, and many other towns and places, and especially the rural districts, were taxed up to the hilt in the matter of education, and he hoped the Government would do what the Governments of both parties had done up to a recent date in the case of two measures closely related—namely, to get the Second Reading of the one and then bring in the other. By that policy no time was wasted, and business would be immensely facilitated. If the Government would do that, and concede, of course, the fundamental and elementary principle of public control following public funds, their great Education Question might be got rid of for a great number of years to come. If some such policy was not pursued, the Government which was in a chance majority to-day might find itself in the course of a few years in a grave minority, and then—he would venture to prophesy for once in his life, and only once—no Liberal Government that came into office could live for three years without reversing the proposals of the present Government if passed in their present form.

*Mr. GEOFFREY DRAGE (Derby) said he should not have addressed the House on the question of education had it not been for the continued hostility shown to this Measure by hon. Members who represented in a great measure the labour interest. However much the hon. Member who had just sat down might differ from him on constitutional questions, he would allow, at any rate, that he had the profoundest sympathy with the labouring classes. He wished, therefore, to explain the ground on which he supported the Government policy. There were certain aspects of the policy of the Government last year to which he would like to call the attention of the hon. Member. In the first place, by the Bill then introduced, an educational ladder was devised, by which a child might rise from elementary to technical, and from technical to secondary—from the lowest to the highest rung in educational matters. More than that, it was made possible for the inmates of Reformatories and Industrial Schools to take their place in the educational scheme of the country. The second point in connection with that Measure was the increased efficiency for which provision was made, not only in Voluntary Schools, but also in Board Schools. He would like to remind the House of the great importance of improved efficiency. The country was undergoing great changes in all matters connected with labour, and what was required now more than all was that a man should be ready to turn from one trade to another, and that there should be a wider appreciation of refinement and knowledge, not only amongst the workers themselves, but amongst the leaders of trade unions and societies and the captains of industry. The hon. Member opposite seemed to think that there was a desire on the Ministerial side of the House to give the Church an undue advantage over Nonconformists in the Government scheme. His impression of the scheme was that it gave the Nonconformists privileges which up to that time they did not possess, and which the Church party were unanimous in wishing that they should have. He recognised from the bottom of his heart the great services Nonconformists had rendered to the cause of education and religion in the country. It was impossible for any man not to see that in labour and educational questions the Nonconformists had been more than once the watch-dogs of humanity and religion. The hon. Member could rest assured that, so far as it was a question of maintaining the just rights of the Nonconformists, there would always be ample support to be looked for from the Conservative side of the House. Another part of the scheme was referred to by the hon. Member, and that was the provision made for the complete democratic local control which the hon. Member desired. That control was to be in the hands of a Committee of the County Council, a body which, he would remind the hon. Member, was elected on a more democratic basis than the School Board. Those on his side of the House were anxious to support local control of education for this reason—that those countries which, like Germany, had made so much advance in education, owed a great amount of that advance to the public control of their institutions, and they were anxious to see Lancashire and Yorkshire as proud of their local institutions as they were of their cricket and football elevens. There were some minor points in this connection in which the hon. Member took a great interest, and for which he should have thought the policy of Her Majesty's Government would have enlisted the hon. Member's co-operation. There was the raising the age of the half-timers in the Bill of last year.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is hardly speaking to the question before the House.

*Mr. DRAGE bowed to the ruling of the Chair. He would say no more on that subject except to remark that it appeared to him that in the scheme of the Government last year, as laid before the House, there was much to appeal to the labour leader. With regard to the present Bill, which was the first earnest of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, it had been urged more than once that any help given to Voluntary Schools should be adequate. He was of opinion that when hon. Members looked into the Vote they would see that the help was adequate. It had also been claimed that the help should affect poor schools only, and be subject to public control. In all these matters the Government had provided proper conditions in the Vote now before the House. Of course, in many respects those on his side of the House would not expect all hon. Members opposite to agree with them in their support of this Measure. There were peculiar reasons why they should support Church Schools—technical, financial, and religious reasons. The variety brought by Church Schools into the management of education was a matter for congratulation, and he felt that as Churchmen they could not be too thankful to the officers of Church Schools who had, on inadequate stipends, carried on their work regardless of the higher stipends they might have got by transferring their services to School Boards. Above all, they had on his side of the House reasons why they should support anything that would give renewed vigour to the system of Voluntary Schools; for many of them had had the advantage as schoolboys of those great Church institutions known as the Public Schools, and of subsequently going to Oxford and Cambridge. He only hoped that the attacks on the Church would be continued, so that the value of the religious side of the institutions in which they had been brought up, and from which they had derived the most valuable lessons of their lives, might the more be brought home to them. In supporting Her Majesty's Government in the Resolution now before the House, he felt convinced he was supporting a Resolution which, so long as he took a part in public life, he would never have cause to regret. Whatever changes in detail might be necessary in the Bill now before the House, he only hoped that hon. Members on his side of the House would look at it from the same point of view as he did, and, sinking all differences, would join with Her Majesty's Government in supporting a Measure which he firmly believed was for the advancement of the country, and of a cause which was above even that of country—namely, the advancement of Christianity.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said the view that there was no case for an equivalent grant in regard to Scotland was not likely to be generally adopted there. It would be felt deeply in Scotland that whereas there they had been departing from the policy of sectarian and approaching the policy of national education, in England they were departing from a policy of national education and approaching more nearly to a sectarian system. In that way suspicion and dread were aroused in Scotland, and, owing to the helpless position of the Scotch Liberal majority, it was not to be wondered at. The Bill proposed that a burden of about £70,000 a year should be laid on Scotland. mainly for the advantage of Church of England schools. Because a proportion of well-to-do Englishmen belonging to the Church of England found their subscriptions to their schools a burden to them, and because many Englishmen would not contribute locally to purposes of education, therefore the people of Scotland, who contributed freely and fully through their local rates to maintain their own schools, were to be called upon to contribute through Imperial taxation to the maintenance of Church of England schools. [*Cheers.*] What was the "intolerable strain" upon the pockets of Churchmen? In the county he formerly represented the education rate had been 6s. 8d. in the pound. It was still several shillings. And yet the Government were going to call upon Presbyterian crofters in the most poverty-stricken districts of Scotland to contribute towards the relief of well-to-do Church people in England. The present was a peculiarly unfortunate moment to select to add to the burdens of the people of Scotland, not to speak of adding to them in the form of a grant to an alien system of education, which was specially designed for the service of an alien Church. The Scotch people were of opinion that the time had come for inquiry into those burdens under which they considered that they had been overtaxed, and also into the condition of the public service in Scotland, which they considered to have been starved. They regarded the proposed levy upon them, not only as unjust, but the purpose towards which that levy was to be devoted as destructive of the best interests of education, and subversive of the true principles upon which any national system of education should rest. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. P. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) said the Bill had been put forward on the ground that the need of Voluntary Schools was urgent, and that unless aid was forthcoming, these schools would die out. Some of them were prepared to admit that they would not be agonised a great deal if some of them did die out. But in the special circumstances of the case they were not prepared to oppose a further grant for education to Voluntary Schools if that was made under what seemed to them to be satisfactory conditions. He admitted that as the nation demanded increased efficiency from these schools, and thus put them to increased cost, it was not unfair that the nation should be called upon to bear that increased cost. But he would remind the House that the "intolerable strain" of which they heard was not the result of the increased demands of the Department, but was due to the grasping policy of sectarian managers and promoters of these schools. Their subscriptions were less per head now than they were 20 years ago, which meant that in order to keep out School Boards in various districts of the country they had undertaken more educational work than they could find subscriptions for. Thus districts which to-day were paying a heavy School Board rate were to be taxed in order to enable other districts to avoid paying these rates. That was a gross injustice, and it was especially unjust because he believed it was the wealthiest districts that had most Voluntary Schools, and the poorest districts that had most School Boards. Another principle indicated by Mr. Balfour was somewhat extraordinary. He said they were going to differentiate between town and country districts, and that towns were to have the advantage and country districts were not. It seemed to him that any privilege or advantage should go to the country districts which were poorest, and not to the towns. They were told that if they crushed out the Voluntary Schools a great burden would be thrown upon the country. No doubt the cost of supplanting these Voluntary Schools would be considerable, but upon whom would it fall? It would not fall upon the nation as an Imperial charge, but upon the localities where the schools were. It would mean that in those districts where they had kept out School Boards the people would have to do as other districts had done. But this Bill involved a charge on districts which had already provided their own Board Schools. The Government said that they were going to aid the Board Schools, and again and again they had been asked why they did not do so now? It was no good for them to say that it was a question of time or of difficult machinery. If they would bring in a Bill giving satisfactory corresponding assistance to Board Schools they would get it through the House. There would even be no difficulty about introducing the necessary machinery into the present Bill. The real difficulty in the way was that the Government knew that they were not going to assist the School Boards in a satisfactory manner. They knew that their scheme was not going to be just to all Board Schools. The fact was that they were only going to help the necessitous schools, and they did not say to what extent and under what conditions. They did, however, say that the aid would not be given under the same conditions as they had laid down for the Voluntary Schools. But, even with regard to these necessitous schools, the deeds of the Party opposite spoke louder than their words. The words of the Government were bad enough; but their deeds were worse. They had been told that there had been a great increase in the number of necessitous schools, the real fact being that there had been an increase in the number of such schools that had discovered that they were entitled to a grant as necessitous schools. The discussions last year showed the managers of these schools that they were entitled to relief under the 97th Clause. The attitude of the Government with respect to the managers' rights under that Clause showed pretty well what value was to be attached to their promises regarding necessitous schools. Many schools had discovered that they had been entitled for years to a grant under Section 97, but when they applied for payment to the Education Department they were refused, on the ground that the application was "out of date." It was not legally "out of date." Why did not the Government defray the arrears to which the necessitous schools were entitled with the

£120,000 that the Chancellor of the Exchequer said must now go to the National Debt Fund? By doing that they would give the country some proof of their good intentions. As matters stood the Education Department were allowing Protestant Nonconformist children to be driven into Roman Catholic Schools. The House had no guarantee that if they voted the money which was now asked for it would be spent in improving the efficiency of schools and the education of the people. They had heard a good deal about the intolerable strain that must be relieved. Did that mean that the pockets of the subscribers to Voluntary Schools were to be relieved? If so this money was going to benefit those subscribers, and not the children. Clergymen had recently been pointing out in appealing circulars that their appeals for assistance to the Voluntary Schools would no longer be necessary when the Government had fulfilled their pledges. That showed the way in which they thought that the money would go. Their idea was that this extra grant would go practically into the pockets of the subscribers. It was said that an effort ought to be made to maintain these denominational schools, because there was a great desire on the part of the people of this country for denominational education. His view was that that desire was very much exaggerated, and that these schools were not maintained from a desire for denominational education. They were largely maintained by clergymen and Churchmen for political and sectarian purposes. The subscriptions were no criterion of the desire of the people for denominational education. What they did indicate was that there were large numbers of people who feared a School Board rate, but not that those persons had any love for denominational education. This dread of a School Board rate was an instructive comment on the love of hon. Members opposite for religious liberty. In hundreds of parishes they strained every effort to prevent School Boards from being established, and that meant that they were driving Nonconformist children into denominational schools. Any additional assistance to be given to Voluntary Schools ought to come from the rates. The localities ought to find the extra money that was required, for localities which already provided for the education of the inhabitants out of a School Board rate ought not to be made to bear a share of the expenses of places where Board Schools had not been established. Why were the Church Party opposed to rate aid? It was because they knew that if a local rate were levied to support the Voluntary Schools it would decimate their subscription lists. If a rate were levied the subscribers would stop their donations, because many subscriptions were given in order to avoid a rate, which must be accompanied by some sort of local control. That was what the sectarian party feared. Of course it was said by hon. Members opposite that the Voluntary Schools were quite as good as the Board Schools. So they were where their supporters were compelled to make them equally good. It was the compulsion of competition that had raised the standard of education in Voluntary Schools, and it was that compulsion of competition which was the intolerable strain of which their supporters complained. Wherever there was a sectarian majority on our School Boards, or whenever there was a sectarian majority in that House, efforts were made to check the progress of the Board Schools and of Board School education. It was the desire of the Church Party—they had indications of this last Session—that a curb should be put upon Board School Education, and that was why the Prime Minister had recommended the Church party to capture the Board Schools in order that those schools might be held back, and that the competition with their own schools might not be so keen. The Church Party in their jealousy would check and hamper education at the very time when the country needed a better education than ever, in order that it might hold its own in the commercial world, and the worst feature in the case was that those who would do this would do it in the name of religion.

*Mr. HARRY FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft) thought that the Debate had been most useful, because it had revealed the true attitude of the Opposition towards the Voluntary Schools of this country. It was true that now and again some tardy admissions were made by Members of the Opposition of the desirability, and in some cases of the necessity, of the continued existence of Voluntary Schools. One very important admission of the kind was made last Session, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife stated that the Voluntary Schools were an integral part of the system of primary education in this country. Here and there then they heard a kind of hollow admission that these schools did some sort of good work. Too often those admissions had been accompanied by a very thinly disguised feeling of hostility to the Voluntary School system, but the great majority of speeches, like the speech of the last hon. Member, merely showed that there was a desire to see the gradual extinction of the Voluntary School system in this country. The right hon. Member for Dartford said that he had not heard many speeches thanking the Government for this partial measure of justice—["hear, hear!"] that was to say, partial, inasmuch as the scheme was not a complete measure of justice, but that it only rendered to the Voluntary Schools some instalment of that measure of justice to which they were entitled. The Government, no doubt, would better appreciate the votes of their followers as indicated by the division list last Tuesday than by speeches indicating a superabundance of gratitude. For his part, he tendered to the Government his very sincere gratitude for this Measure. He thought that, having waited as the Voluntary Schools had done for more than a quarter of a century—under a system in which the Board Schools had been the protected and favoured schools so far as public money was concerned—it must now be gratifying to the supporters of the Voluntary Schools to find that the time had arrived when a Measure was produced in which the country recognised the just claims of the Voluntary Schools to some further measure of recognition from the public purse. A great deal had been said about rate aid. Personally he was not afraid of rate aid, nor was he afraid of popular control—[*cheers*] —subject to the reservation made by the hon. Member for East Mayo, that no attempt should be made to interfere with what hon. Gentlemen opposite called the sectarian teaching adminstered under the Conscience Clause. Subject to that reservation he had no fear; on the contrary, he rather welcomed some measure of popular control of those schools. As to public control, since the Act of 1870 both Board Schools and Voluntary Schools had been under the control of the Education Department. Both were working under the same Code, and both were turning out the same educational results. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] That being so, they were both doing the same work which Parliament had required of them, and therefore on principles of abstract justice, they were entitled to share to the same extent the public money. Yet the Voluntary Schools received, even under this Bill, nothing like their share of public money. It was true sometimes that the friends of Voluntary Schools had been forced into the position of appearing to be retrogressive. But why? If the Government laid upon elementary schools of all classes increasing requirements, justice required that they should provide all those schools alike with the same means of carrying out those requirements. The right hon. Member for Bodmin, in the interesting and instructive speech which he delivered the other night, made a remarkable admission which ought to carry weight when he said that on principles of abstract justice, if once the wishes of the parents were made manifest, and they showed a distinct intention to maintain the Voluntary and denominational schools, then the foundation of our scheme of national education would have to be enlarged in order to take them in. The right hon. Gentleman meant by that that the time would probably come when the Voluntary Schools would be granted by Parliament—not, as he said, at the hands of the Conservative Party, but at the hands of the Members of the Opposition —that same measure of public support to share public money as the Board Schools were now enjoying, and that they should be entitled to come on the rates for a full measure of the educational work they were fulfilling. How had the wishes of parents been expressed? Although those favoured and protected Board Schools had been in vogue for more than a quarter of a century, and had had behind them not only the public money of the Exchequer, but also the unlimited purse of the ratepayers, the Voluntary Schools, labouring under the enormous disadvantage of having to find continually a larger sum out of their own pockets, in addition to the sums they were contributing to the school rates in the district—the Voluntary Schools had not only been enabled to hold their own, but to show that out of the 5,000,000 of children in the public elementary schools, no fewer than 3,000,000 were being educated in our Voluntary Schools. The right hon. Member for East Fife taunted them that this grant was intended to relieve the pockets of the subscribers to Voluntary Schools, and spoke about stimulating the consciences of the supporters of Church Schools. What were the facts? In the last 80 years the supporters of those schools had contributed 40 millions sterling for the establishment and maintenance of those schools, and the subscriptions were upwards of £20,000 a week at this moment. In face of those facts, such taunts were unmerited and unjust. The Member for East Fife had suggested that the needs of the Voluntary Schools for aid might decrease in the future, but it was absurd to suppose that the necessities of these schools would decrease, and he objected to seeing public money granted as it had been hitherto to one class to the gross disadvantage of another. [*Ironical cheers.*] And if ever there was a class which had suffered gross injustice at the hands of Parliament, it was the Voluntary Schools. Every turn of the screw put on at the Education Department had been felt by the Voluntary Schools, because it meant more subscriptions, and their supporters had not, like the Board Schools, any power of raising money from the rates. As to the future necessities of the Voluntary Schools and their position under this grant, it must be remembered that one class on whom the strain had fallen very largely had been the teachers in the Voluntary Schools, and undoubtedly the effect of the Bill would be that those teachers would get a substantial part of the grant in the shape of increased salary. During the past 12 months the requirements of the Education Department had been relaxed to some extent because of the financial position of the Voluntary Schools, but when this Bill was passed, it was certain that whichever Party might be in power, those requirements would then be enforced, and properly enforced, wherever schools were inefficient, whether as regarded their sanitary condition, the staffing, or anything else. In his opinion the Government had exercised a wise discretion in making the sum depend not on the existing necessities, but on the total number of children who might be from time to time in the Voluntary Schools. A great deal had been said about statutory equality between the two systems of schools. This was absurd, because in one case they supplied the means of complying with the demands by giving recourse to the rates, and in the other they supplied no such means whatever. It was because Voluntary Schools had suffered gross inequalities, and because, after this Bill had become law, they would be placed in a more equal though still a far less favoured position than the School Boards, that he thanked the Government for this instalment of justice. All friends of Voluntary Schools would feel a deep debt of gratitude to the Government for what they had done.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said that he did not know whether it was by accident or design that for the last few hours the Minister left in charge of the Bill was not the Minister of Education, and not even an English Member, but a Scotch gentleman filling an office which had nothing to do with the question under discussion. He hoped, however, that the Solicitor-General had been present for the purpose of answering the claim made an behalf of Scotland by the Members for Leith and Haddingtonshire, and he hoped that the Solicitor-General would display as much ingenuity and achieve more success than characterised his efforts the other night. Scotch Members had complained that the Government, by the procedure which they had adopted, had unfairly limited the range of the Debate; because it was impossible to submit to the House the proposition that aid to Board Schools ought to go hand in hand with aid to Voluntary Schools. The answer of the Solicitor-General to that complaint was that to make the scope of the resolutions wider than that of the Bill to be founded on them would be contrary to the practice and traditions of the House. If that were so, then the resolutions reeked with disorder; because there was hardly one of them which was not of larger scope than the Bill. The only thing the Government had taken care to limit was the application of the 5s. grant to Voluntary Schools. The resolutions might equally apply to Scotland and Ireland as well as England, but the Bill was to apply only to England. Therefore the argument of the Solicitor-General was refuted by the resolutions themselves. Scottish Members had another substantial grievance in the course which the Government had adopted. In 1888 grants in aid of the rates were made in certain proportions to England, Scotland, and Ireland. The Scottish Members—led by Mr. Hunter, whose absence and the cause of it they all deplored—demanded that the Scottish grant should go in aid of free education. That led to the claim for free education in England, and when the claim was granted, Scotland again received an equivalent grant. It was the departure from this practice on the present occasion that Scottish Members complained of. When the Bill of last year was under discussion, the Government gave a vague assurance that, if that Bill passed, something should be done for education in Scotland, though there would be no equivalent grant. If that "something" were needed, why was it not done on its own merits? And if not, why was not Scotland given her equivalent grant in the proportion to England's of 11 to 80? No answer had been made to that demand. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had this year repeated the unsatisfactory declaration which he made last year, that the principle of the equivalent grant did not apply, but that, if the Bill passed, something should be done for education in Scotland. The forms of the House would not permit the Scottish Members on the Opposition side of the House—who, in this matter represented the opinion of Scotland—to enter their protest against that declaration in the form of an Amendment to the Resolution; and the fact would be an additional stimulus to the strong opposition they should offer to the Bill, invidious as it was in its general purpose, but particularly in its dealings with Scottish interests. What was the Bill for which they were to make the large sacrifices that were demanded of them? They had not seen it yet, and the exposition of its provisions by the First Lord of the Treasury had not been so lucid that it was completely apprehended even on the right hon. Gentleman's own side of the House. This much, however, was clear. It was a Bill bristling with discriminations. There were discriminations between Board and Voluntary Schools; between town and country, and between associated schools and non-associated schools, for the latter were, in some mysterious way, to be penalised. It was conjecture on his part, but he believed it was true, that, as in the case of the Agricultural Rating Bill of last year, as in this case, the Government had changed their intention since they had laid their proposals before the House. The Government proposed a grant to Voluntary Schools of 5s. per head on the whole number of scholars in such schools, but it now appeared that in some way, certainly not comprehended on that side of the House, the grant was to be so manipulated that the main portion of it was to go to the necessitous Voluntary Schools. He should like to know what was meant by "a Voluntary School." The First Lord of the Treasury had not condescended to tell the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Wait for the Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes, but any step they took on the Bill would be governed by this Resolution and by the meaning attached to the word "Voluntary." In the Bill of last year the definition of a Voluntary School was a school not supported by a School Board rate. On this matter he held the opinion of a distinguished Member of the Government which was responsible for the proposals now before the House. Not many years ago it was said:—

> "The efforts of all lovers of justice and all friends of education must now be directed to the establishing of the principle that representation shall go hand in hand with taxation, and that no grant of national or local funds shall be made to any school, the majority at least of whose managing body does not consist of representatives elected by the district for that purpose."

The distinguished author of that creed was the Colonial Secretary. Was the right hon. Gentleman still "a lover of justice and a friend of education?" If he were, how was he going to justify his position in a Government which proposed to give National funds to schools that had no representatives of the people upon their governing bodies? What was the position of the Government? They had to borrow money to carry out their proposed urgent military defences. When the time came for the discussion of those borrowing proposals it would not be forgotten that the necessity to borrow had been brought about by the policy of the Government in squandering the surplus reserves of the Nation upon sectarian and class purposes—last year in the relief of agricultural rating, and this year in the relief of Voluntary Schools.

Mr. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) entered his humble protest against the rapidity with which the proposals of the Government were to be rushed through the House, and also against the limited scope of the Bill. Nothing had been left undone to limit the scope of the Measure and to suppress criticism. Last year a grant in aid was proposed nominally to aid agriculture. Safeguards and conditions to secure that end were not proposed, and the Amendments moved on the Opposition side of the House were rejected by the Government. The money had gone to increase the purchase value of the landlords' agricultural estates. This year there was a grant in aid proposed nominally to aid education. There were no safeguards or conditions proposed to secure that end; and again the Amendments of the Opposition were clotured, and they were unable to move them on the Committee stage of the Resolution. He thought that, just as in the case of the Landlord Relief Bill, the money they were now asked to vote would not go to the purposes for which it was intended, but would go into the pockets largely of the parsons and their friends. [*Cheers.*] They must recollect that six out of every seven of the denominational schools were managed and controlled by the Church party. If the House was to be again closured before full discussion had been secured, they would, at any rate, have the satisfaction of knowing that the country would take every opportunity of expressing its disapproval of the proposals of the Government in the same way that Walthamstow expressed its opinion. [*Cheers.*] They were told that if they allowed this Bill to slip through, another Bill might follow by which some Board Schools might receive some aid; he, for one, was not prepared to take the shadows instead of the substance. His constituents had authorised him to say that they believed in Voluntary and Board Schools being treated alike by the State, but the public pledge which the Government had given seemed to him to be absolutely inadequate to the equal treatment of those schools. He favoured an increased contribution for the promotion of education in Voluntary Schools, and he thought the Roman Catholics ought to receive special consideration at the hands of the State. But he would not be a party to proposals to endow private schools unconditionally. Those schools already received over seven-tenths of their maintenance from public funds, and he believed that this Bill would promote injustice between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools. In the parish of Walthamstow the Board School rate was 1s. 9d. in the pound, and if Board Schools were to be given an equivalent grant to Voluntary Schools that Board School district ought to receive £3,000. Was it surprising then that the Government proposals should have been emphatically condemned the day before at the ballot box? The right hon. Gentleman opposite would like to see Town Councils managing School Boards, for he admitted that in the discussion on the Bill of last year. He himself did not believe that a Town Council was a suitable body to control the management of education.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now discussing the Bill of last year.

Mr. J. A. PEASE said that it appeared to him that under this scheme the School Board districts which had declined to rate themselves were to be rewarded. Those who had promoted educational progress were to be discouraged. They were apparently going to do nothing to maintain voluntary subscriptions. The First Lord of the Treasury said every school would get some grant.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: No, I distinctly said that schools that did not require a grant would get no grant under the Bill.

Mr. J. A. PEASE begged the First Lord's pardon. He thought the right hon. Gentleman stated that every school would get some grant, but it would be a varying grant. He at once accepted the contradiction. He understood that 1,061 Voluntary Schools at the present time received no subscriptions, 674 received subscriptions of under 1s. from voluntary sources, 1,095 under 2s. 6d., and 967 under 5s. That was to say that of the total number—14,145—of Voluntary Schools in the country, nearly one-third received subscriptions of less than 5s. The total subscriptions of the country from charitable sources amounted, he was told, to £622,000, almost the exact sum which Her Majesty's Government proposed to take out of the pockets of the ratepayers in order to hand it over to the managers of Church Schools. It seemed to him that the Government were endeavouring to supplant voluntary subscriptions by State money. Under the present proposals there was no check whatever upon the expenditure of the grant, and there was no guarantee that the money would go to the promotion of education. There was to be no local supervision. The confessional might be instituted in the schools, creeds might be taught, extraneous duties might be required of teachers and insisted upon by managers, and all at the public expense. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in introducing a deputation to the Prime Minister in November 1895, said, "We are willing to have a certain proportion of subscriptions insisted upon as a condition of grants," but the Government were not proposing that there should be any proportion of subscriptions insisted upon as a condition of their grant. No, they seemed to be callous to the interests of education and merely concerned to relieve the pockets of the wealthy supporters and managers of denominational schools. He objected to the proposals of the Government on one other ground, namely that this money came out of the taxpayers' pockets, out of the pockets of the poorer classes of the community. Seven pounds out of every £10 of taxes came from the poorer classes, and therefore it was not only a question of injustice being done to those who were interested in Board School education, but of injustice done to the taxpayers of the country. He appealed to the Government, although he knew their appeals were of very little use, before it was too late, to withdraw this proposal as it at present stood. If the Government would only deal equally between the Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, he could assure them hon. Members on the Opposition side would approach the scheme in a very different spirit from that in which they were inclined to approach it now; they would endeavour to approach what they admitted to be a difficult question in a way which would enable them to make a satisfactory and permanent, so far as it reasonably could be expected, settlement of this great question.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: My right hon. Friend the Member for Fife, early in the afternoon, stated, with his usual clearness, the position that Gentlemen on this side of the House occupy, and desire to occupy, with reference to the proposed additional grant to Voluntary Schools. We have always stated, and we state again, that to the assistance which is averred to be required—and I have no doubt is required—by Voluntary Schools, we offer no opposition if the grants are made upon conditions that are fair to other parties and in respect of the schools themselves. I may state compendiously what our position is. We take our stand upon the compromise, as it is called, or the settlement of 1870. ["Hear, hear!"] It has worked for the development of the new system of Board Schools, and it has worked certainly not injuriously to the Voluntary Schools which, year after year, have increased in their resources and in their number. Can anybody deny that the number of Voluntary Schools has increased since 1870? Well, therefore, the phrase that the Voluntary Schools, which have increased and are increasing in number every year, are being starved out of existence, is one which does not correspond at all with the facts of the case. [*Cheers.*] You may say that they have not the predominance you desire, you may say that they have not the monopoly of the scholars in this country, but to state that the Voluntary Schools under the operation of the settlemen of 1870 have been starved out of existence, is a statement which is absolutely contrary to the fact. We had addressed to us the other night a speech which I venture to think is amongst the most valuable which has been made in this Debate, I mean the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartford. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "he had always felt, and he felt it most acutely during the six years he was in the Education Department, that if in the slightest degree that machinery"

speaking of the settlement of 1870—

> "was disturbed great friction might inevitably result, leading probably to the utter disorganisation of our whole educational system."

Now that was the right hon. Gentleman's opinion of the danger of disturbing the machinery of the Act of 1870. He says:

> "To-day we were in the midst of one of those educational controversies which cause deep anxiety to all who have Party instincts and deep consternation to those who had good education uppermost in their minds."

I believe that is a perfectly correct description of the present situation. Why is that the situation? Because you are doing the very thing the right hon. Gentleman deprecated—namely, disturbing the machinery of the settlement of 1870. It is not to be said that we maintain there should be no modification of the Act of 1870. There was a great modification made in the year 1876, when the alteration was introduced in respect to the 17s. 6d. limit. That modification in 1876 was perfectly consistent with this principle of the Act of 1870 in regard to the necessity of voluntary subscriptions. There was a most important modification introduced in the Act of 1891 when free education was granted. But these modifications were absolutely consistent with the fundamental principles of the Act of 1870. What were those principles? The Duke of Devonshire referred to one of them, when he said that the equality between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools in respect of the Government grants was a statutory equality. It is quite obvious what the Duke of Devonshire meant. He meant that the equality created by that statute in respect of Government grants was an absolute equality between the two classes of schools. When you came to give a large additional grant of 10s. by way of free education you adhered to that principle, and you gave equally to the Board Schools and to the Voluntary Schools. Therefore, up to this time you did adhere strictly to the principles of the Act of 1870. What we maintain is that this Bill is in fundamental violation of that compromise, inasmuch as it is about to give a great grant from the Exchequer—£600,000—to one class of schools and not to the other. That is the ground upon which we condemn this Bill. We say that all the difficulties that have arisen, and will arise, with reference to this grant, come from your violation of what the Duke of Devonshire justly called the statutory equality established in 1870. The failure of the Bill last year arose from the general feeling that it would operate as a measure of hostility to the Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] Our opposition to that Bill was founded on our belief that it would operate injuriously to the Board Schools, and the moment it was felt in the country that that would be its effect, the fate of that Bill was sealed. [*Cheers.*] Our opposition to this Bill is on the same ground, not because it favours Voluntary Schools, but because in its operation it is intended relatively to depress Board Schools. [*Cheers.*] That is the clear ground of our opposition to this Bill—that is the gist of our opposition. Is it on my statement alone that this Bill is unjust in its exclusion of Board Schools? It is not the language of a political opponent; it is the language of a man who, I venture to say, has rendered more service to education in this country than any other man probably in this House. I mean the hon. Member for the Edgbaston Division of Birmingham. What is his language? Sitting actually behind the First Lord of the Treasury, the other night, he said it was a Bill of "unexpected and extraordinary injustice to the Board Schools of this country." That is not the factious language of a political opponent; it is the condemnation of a man most competent to judge on such a subject—a loyal supporter of the Government. [*Cheers.*] Some examples have been given of this injustice. The right hon. Member for Bodmin quoted the experience of the constituency he represented. Let me give an example of the operation of this Bill upon the constituency I have the honour to represent—West Monmouthshire. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] Has it come to this, then, that hon. Gentlemen opposite intend to clamour down a man who states figures in the interests of his own constituents? [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] There is a great deal too much of this intolerance from Gentlemen on the other side. [*Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.*] We have no intention of allowing the discussion of this Bill to be treated in that manner. [*Cheers.*] Though we may be in a minority, we are entitled to decent treatment, and, if not with concurrence, we have at least a right to expect good manners. [" Hear, hear ! "] I shall proceed, in spite of the clamour, to state the figures—[*Ministerial laughter*]—and if necessary I shall ask your assistance, Mr. Speaker, to enable me to proceed. [*Cheers and Ministerial cries of* " Go on."] You had better have the Closure at once. [*Cheers.*] If you are not going to have discussion in this House, have the Closure at once, and I will sit down. [*Cheers and Ministerial cries of* " Go on ! "]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W).—The clamour is all on your side. [*Opposition cries of* " Oh ! " *and Ministerial cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If that is the support Members of the Cabinet—[*cheers*]—are going to offer their supporters—[*Ministerial cries of* " Order ! "]—we have very little hope of discussions being carried on in a reasonable way. [*Cheers.*] I should have thought that at least the right hon. Gentleman would have desired that the discussion—[*Ministerial laughter and cries of* " Order ! "]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If I am out of order—

*MR. SPEAKER: I was not calling the right hon. Gentleman to order. I was calling to order those who were interrupting him. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Perhaps, Sir, by your authority, I may be allowed to proceed. I am going to give the figures of the schools in West Monmouthshire and what they will receive out of this £600,000. There are two School Board districts in West Monmouthshire—one of them has in Board Schools 3,184 children, and in Voluntary Schools there are 466 children. Now, in respect of the 3,184 children, out of this £600,000 nothing will be received—[" hear, hear ! "]—and in respect of the 466 children there will be £116 paid. [" Hear, hear ! "] In the other districts there are in the Board Schools 5,055 children, in respect of whom nothing will be paid, and there are 287 children in the Voluntary Schools, in respect of whom £72 will be paid. [" Hear, hear."] Therefore, out of a total number of children of 8,992 in a district upon which there are School Board rates paid to the extent of £10,320, the whole amount of aid grant will be £188. [*Cheers.*] Is that not a confirmation of what the hon. Member for the Edgbaston Division described as a case of unexpected and extraordinary injustice? I will take another not far distant district—the Rhondda Valley. In that district there are 14,500 children in Board Schools and 58 in Voluntary Schools, and that industrial valley—not a rich country at all, and with a trade that has recently not been flourishing—will receive out of this £600,000 the amount of £15. [" Hear, hear ! "] That is the way in which this principle of equality will actually operate. I take three other districts together, in which there are 28,000 children in Board Schools, and in respect of whom nothing will be paid, and in which there are 1,662 children in Voluntary Schools in respect of which £416 will be paid. That is the contribution to a district which pays in School Board rates £23,000. [*Cheers.*] Do you expect that treatment of that kind is going to be accepted by the country? That is the history of the districts which, in consequence of their poverty, and which, in consequence of not having wealthy residents, have not Voluntary Schools, and that is what they are to receive out of this £600,000. I take you to another county with which I am also acquainted—the county of Oxfordshire. There the case is almost exactly the reverse. There are 26,000 children in Voluntary Schools, and there are 2,600 children in Board Schools. In that county what will be received out of this grant is £6,500, against the £416 given to the poorer districts in Wales. [*Cheers.*] Do you really think that we are going to accept a settlement of this kind as an act of justice as between the rich and poor? Is it not obvious on the face of it that the scheme of the Bill is to give to the rich districts where Voluntary Schools flourish almost all the money and to give nothing at all to the poor districts? [" Hear, hear ! " *and* " No, no ! "] These are facts that are to be known. [" Oh, oh!"] Do you deny the accuracy of these figures? They are supplied to me as, and I believe they are, absolutely correct. If they are inaccurate have them altered, but if they are correct the conclusion is inevitable. Now, the right hon. Gentleman has complained that he has been suspected of a direct intention to exclude this which is the gist of the whole matter from discussion here by the form of this financial Resolution. Well, I need scarcely assure the right hon. Gentleman that he will never hear from my mouth any imputation that he has intentionally dealt unfairly with the House. [" Hear, hear!"] But at the same time let me remind him that this imputation has come, not from us, but from his own supporters. [" Hear, hear!"] The moment this Resolution appeared political notes and leading articles in Unionist journals declared what an acute man the First Lord of the Treasury was, and complimented him upon what they call in America his "smartness," and said how cleverly he had managed to shut out the Opposition from discussing anything that might be inconvenient. [" Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman's reproaches ought to be addressed to the proper quarter, not to us who are not the authors of these doubtful compliments. The right hon. Gentleman has said, and has repeated it over and over again, that it was not from any such intention, but from the necessary character of the Bill; but that is just what we complain of, that the Bill is framed on a principle of one-sided justice, that the Resolution reflects that injustice and shuts out of consideration matters which ought to be included. [" Hear, hear!"] Will the right hon. Gentleman excuse me for saying that if he wanted to pass a Bill peaceably and quietly through the House he ought to have dealt with it in a different manner? [*Laughter.*] He was trying to state the case fairly. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: " Hear, hear!"] I say you ought to have brought before the House, and to have enabled the House to consider, both these questions together. You have not done that, and in not doing that you have greatly retarded, and will greatly retard, a settlement of this question. You say you are suspected of injustice to Board Schools, and, of course, that suspicion is founded on your Measure of last year. Having proposed a Measure that was greatly unjust to Board Schools, and as such was defeated, you now come forward with a scheme for Voluntary Schools, deliberately abstaining from telling us what you are going to do with Board Schools. How, then, can you complain that we are suspicious of the course you will pursue towards Board Schools? But then the right hon. Gentleman said to-night that of course he did not take particular account of Board Schools because nothing was said about them at the elections; all the pledges were for Voluntary Schools. [" Hear, hear!"] I dare say some right hon. Gentlemen did not say anything to their constituents, but the First Lord of the Treasury, at all events, is the last man who ought to make that statement. What has become of the East Manchester programme of the Unionist Party? [" Hear, hear!"] There was nothing in it about Voluntary Schools, but one of the 15 articles of the East Manchester programme was that all rates of Board Schools were to be paid out of the money of the Exchequer. [*Opposition cheers.*] And the right hon. Gentleman says he said nothing about Board Schools at the election. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: " Hear, hear!"] Does he disavow this Manchester programme, this Unionist programme? [" Hear, hear!"] Well, I suppose there are recent experiences which have rather superannuated that programme. ["Hear, hear!"] I should like to know if all the 15 articles are disavowed, or is it only this one article referring to education and Board Schools? What a wretched pretext is this now put forward for not dealing with Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] He also said to-night that we were greatly disappointed on this side of the House because the Bill was no longer such a Bill as was necessary to be carried into operation by March 31. No, Sir; we are not disappointed; I have heard Gentlemen on the other side of the House say they were. [*Cheers.*] But we are not disappointed at all; we are greatly pleased, because it deprives the right hon. Gentleman of the only pretext which he could have plausibly alleged for not including Board Schools. [*Cheers.*] At first we heard nothing of what was going to be done for Board Schools. There have been some vague insinuations as to what may or may not be done for them. There was nothing said in the opening statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, but after the first night's Debate, and after what I should call the loud uneasiness of the Borough Members on the other side of the House, it was found necessary to say something about the Board Schools, though nothing had been said at the elections. Something, therefore, was to be put forward which would quiet their discontent; and when the right hon. Member for Dartford got up and applied partly soothing and partly castigation, appropriate to his ancient profession, to the Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway, he told us that he understood that a pledge, and a perfectly distinct pledge, would be given by the Government in the course of the Debate that a similar Measure would be applied to the necessitous Board Schools. Well, we are waiting for that distinct pledge still. [*Cheers.*] We have some very indistinct statements, but we are as far as ever from knowing what it is the Government are really going to introduce into their Bill for the Board Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] If the Government have made up their minds, why do they not tell us so? They say it is more convenient to have two Bills. That is a very curious Parliamentary proceeding. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not necessary; but even if they had determined to have two Bills they might have told us the general principles which were to govern the other Bill, which was the necessary complement to the Bill they have introduced. They have been compelled by the pressure of their own supporters to hold out expectations of measures which they have never explained. I can only say that it is not a conciliatory manner of introducing this Bill or one calculated to disarm criticism. If they had only told us what sort of justice—I do not say the details or machinery by which it is done—it is what they contemplate giving to the Board Schools they would very much facilitate the passing of the Bill. ["Hear, hear!"] All they tell us is that they will do something for the necessitous Board Schools. Great emphasis is put upon the adjective "necessitous," but when we asked the other night that the same adjective should be applied to Voluntary Schools they said, "Oh, no; that is quite out of the question." ["Hear, hear!"] What is the meaning of that? It shows they do not mean to deal with Board Schools upon the same terms as they are dealing with Voluntary Schools. [*Cheers.*] The very introduction of that limitation shows perfectly well that equal justice is not to be meted out to the two classes of schools. Are they going, in the words of the right hon. Member for Dartford, to give "similar treatment to the two schools?" Until you tell us that you cannot expect to get on with this Bill. We have a right to demand that we should be told if the Government mean similar treatment to be given to the two classes of schools and an equivalent grant. ["Hear, hear!"] What was the plan for the Voluntary Schools? I think at last we understand it very well. They are going to give 5s. a head—that is the measure of the grant—for all children in average attendance in all the Voluntary Schools; and then they have got machinery for distributing that. Are they going to give to the Board Schools

5s. a head upon the children in average attendance and distribute that? [An Hon. Member: "No."] They are not. Very well. We understand, at all events, what they are not going to do, but they have not told us what they are going to do. The right hon. Gentleman has explained to us how he is going to distribute the £600,000 among the necessitous Voluntary Schools. I will not at this time of night go into the extraordinary plan of the voluntary associations which are not voluntary, but which are penalised. I will not inquire into the happy concert of these boards when they meet together, and some of whom, as the right hon. Gentleman has just explained, are to get nothing at all and others a great deal. They are to advise the Education Department, and the Education Department is to settle the quarrels among these contending voluntary associations. ["Hear, hear!"] We shall no doubt have some very amusing discussions upon this extraordinary plan, which seems to be a special favourite of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know that the right hon. Gentleman himself has any very special acquaintance with the working of the Education Department. I should rather like, and I think the House is entitled to have the opinion of the Minister responsible—[*loud cheers and laughter*]—for the Education Department upon the happy prospects of this ingenious system. When the time comes no doubt he will be put forward to defend it; but, in the meanwhile, and until I have heard the vindication of this scheme, I shall adhere to the opinion expressed on the first night of the Debate by the hon. Member for Islington—that it is a plan which will be impracticable and unworkable, and will disappear before Committee. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I never said anything of the sort. I referred to the way in which the money was to be distributed.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is the very thing. [*Cheers.*] The money is to be divided amongst these voluntary penalised associations under the advice and control of the Minister responsible for education in this House. The hon. Gentleman does not deny that that is the opinion he formed of this plan, and I entirely concur in that opinion. When I asked: "What are you going to do for the Board Schools?" the right hon. Gentleman said that he could not put it into the same Bill, because it would require different machinery. Surely you might have different machinery in the same Bill, but I hope it will be more reasonable and rational machinery. ["Hear, hear!"] But I did not ask about the machinery; I asked, "Are you going to give to the Board Schools *pro rata* out of this Government grant the amount that is due to them—5s. per head?" That is what is demanded by the principles of the compromise of 1870. ["No!"] Yes, it is; and that is what you decline to give. When you gave the 10s. grant for free education you gave to all schools alike without discrimination. You gave to Board Schools, to Voluntary Schools, and to rich and poor schools alike. [*Cheers.*] That has been, and is, the statutory equality of which the head of the Education Department spoke, and the extraordinary thing is that every principle and every detail in this Bill is contrary to the opinion of the chief and the second in the Education Department at this moment. [*Cheers.*] We want a reply to that question. If it is "No," and if I understand the Colonial Secretary's interjection, you do not—

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon; I have not interjected anything. [*Cheers.*]

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I thought I had ascertained from an interjection of the right hon. Gentleman that it is not the intention of the Government to give to the Board Schools on the same footing. ["Hear, hear!"] But let us see how—and that is the really important matter—how much you are going to set aside for the Board Schools. You told us that you were going to set aside as much as the Chancellor of the Exchequer could spare. If that is so, of course the Manchester programme is abandoned. When the right hon. Gentleman came in contact with the Chancellor of the Exchequer he found the Manchester programme was not practicable. [*Cheers.*] What the Chancellor of the Exchequer could spare was £600,000. That is going to be given to the Voluntary Schools. What remains, then, for the Board Schools? Last year you could scrape up £2,000,000, and you gave it to the agricultural interest and left the towns to wait for what they could get. ["Hear, hear!"] You are proceeding upon the same policy now. You are going to sweep up for your favoured friends everything that can be got, and the Board Schools are to wait and see what is left for them. I commend that to the consideration of the boroughs. [*Cheers.*] This is the second time they have been left out in the cold and told to wait. First the towns were told to wait for assistance in their general rates, and now the towns are to wait for assistance in their rates under the School Boards; but gentlemen who are the fortunate owners of land—they get their £2,000,000 down on the nail; and those gentlemen who are the principal promoters and proprietors of Voluntary Schools, they get their £600,000 in cash down. [*Cheers.*] But for the rest, the towns, with their heavy rates, they are to wait. It will be all swept up by the two classes who have the advantage of being favoured by Gentlemen opposite. These are the things we ought to be told. We ought to be told what residue you mean to devote for the benefit of the Board Schools. I should like to ask why is the public money, to the extent of £600,000, to be given specially to districts which have refused to rate themselves—[*cheers*]—which decline to subscribe, and none is to be given to districts like those in West Monmouth and Cornwall and many others which have made the greatest sacrifices to support Board Schools? This question ought to be answered—[*cheers*]—and we should understand exactly what is the policy of the Government in the matter. Then the right hon. Gentleman, I suppose with a view to shorten their Debates and add to their tranquillity, dragged in Walthamstow, and asked me whether I thought this Bill had anything to do with it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: No; I did not.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Why was Walthamstow introduced?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: If the right hon. Gentleman wants to know, I will tell him why. I was interested to know whether Walthamstow was influenced by the creed of the right hon. Gentleman last year on the effect of the relief of the rates, or whether by his creed of this year, which is exactly the opposite. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: As the right hon. Gentleman has introduced a subject of which I confess I know something, and attributes to my and your creed—[*turning to the Opposition Benches*]—an influence which he supposes it has had in the result which we have witnessed in the polling at Walthamstow—if my creed has had that result I am proud—[*cheers*]—I have some information at his disposal, and I will tell him what that information comes to. This Bill had a great deal to do with the election at Walthamstow, not only in its educational aspect, but specially because it is another example of that pernicious spirit of class legislation—[*cheers*]—which the present Government have persistently promoted since they have been in office. [*Renewed cheers.*] You began with the Agricultural Rating Bill under which you gave two millions of money to one class; under this Bill you are going to give £600,000 to another class. These are the illustrations of the policy you are pursuing; that is the creed which has destroyed you in Walthamstow. [*Cheers.*]

And you may add to it the miserable failure of your social legislation as instanced in the Truck Bill and the Conciliation Bill. [*Renewed cheering.*] That is what has destroyed you in Walthamstow. The right hon. Gentleman challenges me to discuss the question of the incidence of rates. That is "a large order" at this time of night. But as the right hon. Gentleman has challenged me I will give him a brief answer. I do not know that the right hon. Gentleman has ever made the doctrine of rates his special study. He has a colleague on that bench, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who is one of the greatest authorities upon it, and if he would address himself to him he would receive a far clearer explanation of his difficulties than I can venture to offer. But I will tell him as well and as shortly as I can that everything I have ever said on the subject of rates last year is precisely identical with that which I have said and intended to say with reference to rates on this occasion. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] That is the way you meet me when I am going to answer a question of the right hon. Gentleman. In dealing with the rates last year, first of all you dealt with the rates of only one class, not of all classes. That is the complaint I make of you under this Bill—you deal with only one interest and not with both. Then the right hon. Gentleman said truly that I had said the agricultural rate fell on the owner. So it does. Let him ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, who is a great authority on the subject. He is the author of the doctrine of the hereditary rate. He pointed out how all the old rates which for the most part prevail in the agricultural districts fell on the owner, and distinguished from them the new rates, and especially the education rates, which fell on the occupier, and which prevail especially in the towns. He evidently does not know the elements of the doctrine of rating. If the right hon. Gentleman could only procure the work of the First Lord of the Admiralty—[*laughter*]—he would there find all about the doctrines of rating. One of the great canons laid down by the First Lord of the Admiralty is, that the rate had a different incidence in the country and in the town. In the country comparatively little falls upon the rate for Board Schools, whilst a great deal falls upon it in the towns. Therefore it is obvious that the relief ought to be given chiefly in the towns, and not in the country; and yet you have gone and given your relief where the rates are low in the rural, and none where the rates are high in the eastern districts. ["Hear, hear!"] If the right hon. Gentleman does not understand this, it is thoroughly understood in Walthamstow—[*cheers*]—where they have the most practical reasons for understanding it; and if the right hon. Gentleman had to pay the education rate that they pay in Walthamstow, he would understand it too. I have now—I hope without unduly occupying the time of the House—[*cries of* "Oh!" *and cheers*]—indicated my views on the subject of rates, and I have also indicated to the right hon. Gentleman where he can obtain that fuller information of which he stands much in need. [*Laughter.*] Then you say that you prefer two Bills to one. That is a matter of taste, but it is a procedure that will occupy very much more time. However, as long as you intend to conceal what you purpose to do for the Board Schools, we shall persist in endeavouring to extract from you that information, and what fund you intend to set apart for the purpose. ["Hear, hear!"] You say you are going to introduce a Bill for the Board Schools. The right hon. Gentleman the other day spoke in a tone of virtuous indignation because the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton had suggested that it was possible that that Bill might come to grief in another place. I do not see that that could be intended as an imputation upon the Government unless, indeed, it is taken for granted and asserted that the Government have got the House of Lords in their pockets. I do not know that that would be a very discreet assertion to make—["hear, hear!"]—and there were indications last year that it is not always the case. But there is a much more immediate danger to any Bill that provides funds to do justice to Board Schools, and that comes from a large section of the supporters of the Government in this House. Do they desire that equal justice should be done to the Board Schools? I should like very much to know the opinion of the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, and of the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich, *par nobile fratrum.* According to the language we have always heard from them, what they desire is to destroy the competition of the Board Schools; but if you give equal justice to both kinds of schools you do not destroy that competition. At the great Church conference which he attended the noble Lord opposite protested against the resolution for giving equal aid to Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, to which he would only consent on the condition of rate-aid. But then he is not going to have rate-aid. If the noble Lord will now get up in his place and say that he desires a Bill that will give equal aid to Board Schools and Voluntary Schools, then I might believe in the probable success of a Bill in favour of the Board Schools. But if he will not, and I do not think it likely that he will, the obstruction to that Bill will come from the benches below the Gangway opposite. Well, that Bill is to be introduced late in the Session, and what assurance have we that such a Bill as that would ever pass into law? I am extremely sceptical on that subject, and it is the fault of the Government that we are sceptical on this subject. If they have made up their minds as to what they are going to do, why do not they give us more information? If they would tell us what are the principles upon which they are about to deal with the Board Schools, if they would give us some satisfactory assurance, they might then get on with this Bill. There is one other point to which I must refer. I was going to say that if the Government will join these two Measures together—not, if you like, in the same Bill—but if they will only have what is called a "bi-metallic tie"—although I should not like to have the bi-metallic principle applied where one party gets the gold and the other the silver—[*laughter*]—if they will do that we shall be thankful. But if they will not do that we must, of course, offer resistance to a Measure which otherwise we might be willing to support. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh."] When the right hon. Gentleman makes an assertion I accept it, as I feel bound to accept it, because those are the good manners of the House of Commons. But why should there not be a reciprocation of the compliment, and why when I make a statement of that kind should it be met with jeers and clamours? [*Cheers.*] It used not to be so when I knew the House of Commons first. The behaviour then was extremely different from what it is now, and I must be excused if I prefer the ancient manners of the House of Commons to those now in vogue. [*Cheers.*] The second principle which was enshrined in the settlement of 1870 was that Voluntary Schools should always be called upon to make subscriptions of a substantial character. That was the object of the 17s. 6d. limit. You are going to remove it. What security are you about to give for the voluntary subscriptions? Is it not a remarkable fact, considering what a capital point this is in the whole question that the right hon. Gentleman, in his opening speech, did not say a word about it? He spoke for half an hour expounding the details of this wonderful voluntary association, but on those securities to be given for voluntary subscriptions, he was silent. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Member for Dartford said—

> "he could not but allude to the question of subscriptions to Voluntary Schools. It was perfectly obvious that they must not allow this Measure

to go forward as a relief to subscribers of Voluntary Schools. ['Hear, hear!'] He thought it should be a *sine quâ non* in all cases in which assistance was to be given to the locality that there should be some guarantee on the part of the locality that the existing subscriptions should be maintained."

Everybody feels that is one of the vital and most fundamental conditions of this great question, and on that the Government are absolutely silent. [*Cheers*]. That carries with it another vital principle, and that is the question of popular control. [*Cheers*]. Why is it that the Voluntary Schools are allowed to be conducted without popular control? Is it on the ground of their voluntary subscriptions? [*Cheers.*] But you are attempting, so far as we know, to get rid of the necessity for voluntary subscriptions and yet to exclude popular control. There again this Bill runs directly and diametrically contrary to the fundamental principles of the Act of 1870. I confess that I heard with great satisfaction the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo as to popular control. On the part of the Roman Catholic Church, which is not less denominational than the English Church, he declared in favour of the principle of popular contral. ["Hear, hear!"] Why, I should like to ask, is the Anglican Communion more afraid of the people than the Church of Rome in this country? [*Cheers.*] Yet this is a most important declaration made by the hon. Member for East Mayo, and I have seen it made in public by Cardinal Vaughan—

MR. J. DILLON (Mayo, E.): And by all the Bishops.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, and by all the Bishops. Here then are the Bishops of the Church of Rome who are not afraid of the people—[*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and counter cheers*]—while the Bishops and the clergy of the Church of England are the enemies of popular control. ["No, no" *and cheers.*] Then you are willing to accept popular control. [*Cheers.*] We must ascertain, it is clear, how that matter stands. If the Government want this Bill to pass easily let them be frank with the House; let them tell us what they are going to do with the Board Schools. It is not a question of the stopping of their legislation with reference to Voluntary Schools; we have no power of moving Amendments in favour of the Board Schools; but they cannot be surprised that, in the obscurity in which they keep the question, we and the country should believe they are not going to mete out equal treatment to the two kinds of schools. The right hon. Gentleman spoke about a permanent settlement; he said that he wished for a permanent settlement. I think that every one wishes for a permanent and friendly settlement. [*Cheers.*] But the right hon. Gentleman knows, and every one knows, that there cannot be a permanent settlement unless we come to an understanding. I might appeal to the principle of your Conciliation Bill, which is to bring the two parties together in order that they might respectively exchange their view. If the right hon. Gentleman or his friends were to come forward and tell us how—I do not say in detail, but generally—they are going to deal with the Board Schools, then there is a possibility, nay, a high probability—though we might differ as to details—that a settlement of this question might be arrived at; and then, instead of that friction which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dartmouth so greatly deplores, we should have a friendly discussion across the floor as to the method of dealing with both classes of schools. I must say if the Government persist in holding back their intention—["No!"] Why do you say "No"? Do you imagine you know? If so, the Gentleman who says "No," must have had some private communications from the Government. [*Laughter*]. Can anybody pretend that the Government have told us what they are going to do for the Board Schools, how much money they propose to set apart for them, and on what principle they are going to deal with them? Let the Government make those declarations and then we shall have some hope that these discussions upon education will be conducted in the spirit we all desire they should be conducted, and the House of Commons will be able to act without any friction or Party feeling in discharge of its duties in regard to this great subject. [*Cheers.*]

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: At this late hour of the evening I certainly should not have presumed to detain the House more than a few minutes, but the speech of the right hon. Gentleman will, I am sure, be felt by the House to deserve some reply. [*Cheers.*] I think on the whole we are indebted to him for that speech. Of course I am a prejudiced listener, but I thought it was a bit discursive—[*laughter*]—and that some parts were a little superfluous. ["Hear, hear!"] I thought it was quite unnecessary that the right hon. Gentleman should lecture the House of Commons in the spirit of Mr. Turveydrop upon its deportment. [*Laughter.*] It seemed to me not to deserve the criticisms which the right hon. Gentleman addressed to it. But I think we are indebted to the right hon. Gentleman, because there was after all in his speech an indication of the main issue, which he, at all events, wishes to be considered as the question between the two sides of the House. The right hon. Gentleman tell us, as many Members on that side of the House have told us, that they are quite willing to give assistance to necessitous Voluntary Schools. They have shown their willingness by obstructing this Bill. [*Cheers and laughter.*] But while the right hon. Gentleman is deeply attached to the future of Voluntary Schools, and while he is desirous to go as far as the Government in preserving them from extinction, he is afraid lest we should do an injustice to the Board School system; and he said that the great object of his Party is to prevent us from depressing the Board Schools and from infringing the principle of equality which was set up by the Act of 1870. Equality is a very fine thing, but it requires a little definition; and I should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman means by equality between the Board Schools and the Voluntary Schools of the country. [*Cheers.*] The Voluntary Schools and the Board Schools are, as he says, at present absolutely equal in regard to their claims upon the Imperial Exchequer.—[*cheers*]—and the Voluntary Schools cannot get a penny from the rates. Is that equality?

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I was speaking of equality as established by the Act of 1870 and as defined by the Duke of Devonshire. [*Cheers.*]

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman is always anxious to throw off responsibility upon absent people. [*Cheers and laughter.*] I know nothing about what the Duke of Devonshire may have said on this particular point. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] But I will answer for him to this extent—that he never said and never pretended and thought that the condition of things as between Board Schools and Voluntary Schools were equal in regard to the rates. [*Cheers.*] That is one point then as to which equality has to be specially defined before we can call it equality at all. It is equality in inequality as defined by the Act of 1870, which never pretended to be equal. ["Hear, hear!"] But that is not all. The Board Schools at the present time have under the Act of 1870 recourse to extra assistance from the State when they are necessitous. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman spoke as the Member for West Monmouth; and he has studied some extracts bearing upon the educational condition of West Monmouth. But he has not gone far enough. I do not know whether he went as far as what I am going to tell him. Last year the Board Schools of Monmouthshire were either paid or there was payable to them £1,400 over and above the grant—[*cheers*]—under the exceptional clause of the Act. Is that equality? [*Cheers.*] Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to pay at the same rate to all the Voluntary Schools of the country? Why, Sir. we are removing inequalities. [*Cheers, and Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] I am almost afraid to say it, but we are an equalising and a levelling Government. [*Laughter.*] Now we go a step further. The right hon. Gentleman says that he is quite in favour of assisting Voluntary Schools which are in danger of extinction. That is the object of this Bill. [*Cheers and ironical laughter.*] We are so far carrying out the earnest desires of the right hon. Gentleman. [*Laughter.*] Then why does he denounce us for a job? Why does he denounce us for class legislation? Why does he say we are giving this money to our friends?

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: You are giving it only to them.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, it is absolutely untrue. We are not giving it to our friends. [*Cheers and cries of* "Oh!"] I doubt very much whether hon. Gentlemen opposite are logicians. [*Laughter.*] They are admirable politicians and partisans, because they cheer everything that comes from their Leader. [A LIBERAL MEMBER, "We stick to our own side."] When we gave relief to agriculture, if it were true, as the right hon. Gentleman contended, that that relief went to the landlords—which we always deny—[*cheers*]—but if that relief went to the landlords, you might truly say we gave it to our friends, because it went into the landlords' pockets. But into whose pockets will this grant go? Who will be peculiarly and particularly benefited by the grant to Voluntary Schools? [*Opposition cries of* "The Parsons."] No, it is not. The people who will benefit by the grant are the whole community of the ratepayers. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman talks about the ratepayers being injured by this grant to the Voluntary Schools, as if we were taking money from the taxes of the country and putting it into the pockets of private individuals. We are doing nothing of the kind. [*Cheers.*] Let me take a concrete instance. Here is Birmingham, about which I know as much—well, as the right hon. Gentleman knows about West Monmouthshire. [*Loud laughter.*] We have got School Boards in Birmingham. We are proud of it. We are proud of the Board Schools of Birmingham as institutions of the town, and anything that was calculated to depress them or to do any injustice to them would be resented by every elector in the town. ["Hear, hear!"]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is why the Chairman of the School Board voted against you. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*]

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Chairman of that Board is a follower of the right hon. Gentleman himself, and he is not in the House. [*Prolonged Ministerial cheers and laughter.*] I am not afraid to face my constituency on this subject, I have done so already. [*Cheers.*] What is the state of the case in Birmingham? It is, that while we have Board Schools which deal with the larger proportion of the children of the city, we have also very efficient Voluntary Schools. ["Hear, hear!"] I doubt very much whether there will be a large claim on behalf of the necessitous Voluntary Schools in Birmingham. ["Hear, hear!"] But if these Schools were necessitous, and if they were allowed to be extinguished, the result would be that the School Rate, which at the present moment in Birmingham is 1s. 0½d. in the pound, would be raised to 1s. 9d. [*Cheers.*] The question for the ratepayers, which I have put before them, and by which I am content to stand or fall, is whether they would prefer to give a small grant as contributions to the Voluntary Schools, in order to preserve these schools from extinction, or whether they would pay

1s. 9d. in the pound as school rate in order to have a theoretically complete and uniform system? [*Cheers.*] And what is the position of the right hon. Gentleman? Although he goes out of his way most unnecessarily to taunt us with motives in this matter, he agrees with our conclusion and object, and is willing to give the money which is necessary to preserve the Voluntary Schools from extinction; but he says there must be equality in regard to the Board Schools. [*Opposition cheers.*] I quite agree. Only, perhaps, my definition of equality may be somewhat different from that of the right hon. Gentleman. [*Laughter.*] Are the Board Schools in the same position as the Voluntary Schools? The Voluntary School has no resource beyond the Government grant and the voluntary subscription. If those two are exhausted and its funds are still insufficient, it must go to the wall. What is the position of the Board School? The Board School has the grant, and it has in addition the almost bottomless purse of the ratepayer—["hear, hear!"]—and, Sir, until you can show in regard to the Board School that the purse of the ratepayer is not bottomless, or, at all events, that the demand on the purse of the ratepayer has already gone to the extreme limit of justice, you cannot pretend that the Board Schools are necessitious. [*Cheers.*] It is perfectly absurd—perfectly absurd. You contend in Birmingham, for instance, where there is now a shilling rate, that you are called upon to come to the aid of the ratepayers of Birmingham, and to give us 5s. a head upon all the children in the Board Schools, Well, Sir, we never asked for anything of the kind, but if we did, and if that is your view, what is that you are doing? What is it that is proposed? It is not a grant to Board Schools. I do not see my hon. Friend and colleague the Member for the Edgbaston Division here, but it is not as he seemed to suppose a question of Board Schools against Voluntary Schools—the Board Schools in any case are safe—but it a question between the ratepayer and the Imperial taxpayer. ["Hear, hear!"] The question is not in any district as to whether the Board School should be extinguished—that is impossible; but the question is whether a particular ratepayer should be burdened beyond what is just, and whether in his case an additional charge should be thrown upon the Imperial taxpayer. ["Hear, hear!"] Now, if I have made that clear the whole case of the right hon. Gentleman falls to the ground. [*Cheers.*] My hon. Friend the Member for the Edgbaston Division, whose capacity, whose interest in the subject, and whose convictions on the subject we all respect, rested his argument upon the fact that the Board Schools and Board School education is going to be injured. I say that is absolutely impossible. I say that there is nothing in this Bill, if it were to be passed to-morrow, that could by any possibility damage or put in a worse position than now any single Board School in the country. As to whether ratepayers in certain Board School districts are being unfairly taxed, that is a question which is well worthy the attention of the House of Commons, and to which the Government have promised to call your attention. But to put the two things in the same scale, to say that one thing cannot be dealt with without the other, is to attempt to compare two things which are incomparable, and is surely absurd and a fraud upon the intelligence of the House. (*Cheers.*) Let me make my way clear so far as I have gone. I think I have shown that, whatever may be the case for the poor Board schools, it does not affect the Board school education; it is a totally different question; it is an economic question; it is the ratepayers' question. ["Hear, hear!"] Very well; then I say we are entitled to deal with it separately, we are entitled to deal with it at a separate time; and we are entitled, if we like, to put it second; but we have not attempted to put it second, except in point of time. [*Ironical Opposition cheers*]. Well, our time is not wholly our own. [*Laughter.*] But we at all events pledge ourselves to this—if hon. Gentlemen opposite will give us reasonable time we will deal with this matter, even although it is not as I have shown, as urgent and as pressing, and we will deal with it in the same Session. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman says, "Oh, that is not enough for us. We are of a suspicious disposition. [*Laughter.*[We do not trust you." [*Opposition cheers.*] We never asked for your confidence. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] "No," says the right hon. Gentleman,

> "we must have assurances. We must see your Bill. Bring your Bill before us. Lay it on the table. Let us see what it is, and then you cannot conceive what success we will bring you, how we will rush through this Bill, what room we will make for the other legislation, for those social reforms which we are taunting you with not bringing forward."

I confess that nothing amuses me more than the different views which the right hon. Gentleman takes according to the quarter of the House in which he sits. [*Ironical laughter.*] Why, Sir, we are to bring forward this Bill which does not deal *pari materia* with the other; we are to bring it forward at the same time; produce it and show it. The right hon. Gentleman was, I think, in the Cabinet which brought forward the last Reform Bill. Does he remember the position which he and the Government of Mr. Gladstone took upon that occasion with regard to Redistribution and the Franchise? ["Hear, hear!"] He was challenged then to produce his Redistribution of Seats Bill before he went on with the Franchise Bill. He absolutely refused to do so, and why did he refuse? Because, he said, the Opposition of that day would use the Redistribution Bill to delay the Franchise Bill. He said, "We will get our Franchise Bill through and then we will produce the Redistribution Bill," and we say the same. [*Cheers.*] We well get our Voluntary Schools Bill through before we produce the other Bill; but when we produce our Board School Bill we will deal equally with it in this sense—where there is a necessitous Board School, and a necessitous Board School district, we will give it adequate assistance, and, having done that, we shall have done exactly the same for the Board School that we are now doing for the Voluntary School. I have only one word more to say before I sit down. I confess I looked forward to the right hon. Gentleman's speech with especial interest, for I expected an apologia from him on the subject of the inconsistency with which he has been charged. Sir, the consistency of the right hon. Gentleman is one of the priceless possessions of the House of Commons. [*Laughter and long and continued Opposition ironical cheers.*] I regret that the explanation he gave was not entirely satisfactory to my mind. He was challenged with saying that grants that go in relief of the rates were relief of the landlord.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said the relief under the Agricultural Rates Act was relief of the landlords.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, the right hon. Gentleman was charged with saying that the relief of the rates was relief of the landlord in the case of the Agricultural Rates Act. It is curious that the Agricultural Rates Bill dealt with all these rates, and it dealt with the very poor districts with which we are going to deal with in this Bill. It is a most singular thing that the right hon. Gentleman now endeavours to establish a difference between the position of the identical ratepayer in the case of the Agricultural Rates Bill and in the case of this Bill. He says that when a man receives, say, 6d. from the Agricultural Rates Bill it goes immediately through him into the pocket of the landlord; and when he receives 6d. out of this Bill it stops in his own pocket. [*A laugh.*] That is an explanation which I do not understand, and which to me explains nothing. [*Laughter.*] It appears to me that the argument is clear that the incidence of the rate must be the same in all cases, and if it goes into the pocket of the landlord in the case of the Agricultural Relief Bill, it goes into it equally in this case. Of course the right hon. Gentleman will say that I have made no special study of this subject. I imagine that knowledge on it is confined exclusively to the right hon. Gentleman and to my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty. [*Laughter.*] I am convinced of this—I could find many speeches of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in which he has again and again alluded to this view of his—that the rate falls ultimately not upon the occupier, but on the man behind him. And although it may be convenient for the purposes of argument, it is nevertheless extremely illogical to apply a different test to the two Bills. Sir, the moral of this Debate is this—that, although it may be lawful to learn from an enemy, it would be extremely unwise to take their advice. [*Cheers and laughter.*] We have our own course to pursue; we are governed by our own pledges—[*cheers and counter-cheers*]—and we shall proceed to carry them out. [*Cheers.*] We have brought in a Bill which will give effect to one pledge that appeared in the great majority of the addresses of our own party; which will save the Voluntary Schools from extinction, and bring aid, and adequate aid, where it is most needed. We know that this Bill is an effective way of securing that object, and we believe that, making all allowance for Parliamentary procedure, it is the quickest way. We are quite certain that we shall not hasten our procedure or improve the prospects of our policy by accepting the advise of the right hon. Gentleman and bringing in another Bill at the same time. [*Loud cheers.*]

*MR. JOHN McLEOD (Sutherland) on rising was received with loud cries of "Divide." After a vain effort to make himself heard, the hon. Member shouted out, "Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the Adjournment of the Debate." [*Ministerial laughter and Opposition cheers.*]

*MR. SPEAKER: I could not put that question. [*Ministerial cheers.*] At the same time, I hope the House will give a hearing to the hon. Gentleman. [*Opposition cheers.*]

*MR. McLEOD said he desired to call attention to a matter that was of very great, even of supreme, importance to the part of the country from which he came—namely, where Scotland came in in this matter. That question had not been answered during the Debate. On Monday evening the Chancellor of the Exchequer made an explanation to the effect that there was to be no equivalent grant to Scotland in regard to the grant from public funds to voluntary schools in England. On the following day a question was put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject by a supporter of the Government, and he then replied that whilst the Treasury did not admit that Scotland had a right to an equivalent grant they would be prepared to give fair aid to primary education. But primary education was already provided for in Scotland. ["Hear, hear!"] This meant getting no aid at all. The statement that Scotland was not entitled to an equivalent grant was entirely out with the facts. How the matter stood was laid down by the late Mr. Craig Sellar in his "Manual on the Education Acts." The hon. Gentleman then quoted from Mr. Sellar. It was perfectly clear therefore that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was entirely wrong in saying that the Treasury were never committed to an equivalent grant for education in Scotland; as a matter of fact in every single case where a grant in aid had been made to Scotland a portion had been devoted to educational purposes. It was impossible for a Scotch Member to be too early in taking exception to the dictum of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he made his protest against what he thought a most iniquitous proceeding on the part of the Government. [*Interruptions which rendered the* HON. MEMBER *inaudible.*] He did not pretend to be an educational authority or a financial expert, and English Members must settle the matter of giving aid to denominational schools with their constituents, but as a Scotch Member, he would feel himself unworthy of a seat in the House if he did not protest in the most emphatic manner against a proposal to do Scotland out of her equivalent grant. The House was aware that, in the financial relations between England, Scotland, and Ireland, Scotland was at a much greater disadvantage even than Ireland.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot enter upon the general question of the financial relations.

*MR. McLEOD regretted that he had trespassed. Still the point he wished to make was this, that in his humble judgment the House should show more than ordinary consideration in this matter, inasmuch as, according to general opinion, Scotland had been very hardly treated in other financial relations. [*Loud cries of* "Divide"] He again asserted the claim of Scotland for an equivalent grant for the aid of secondary education, and appealed in turn to the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Solicitor General, to make some statement before they asked even their own Scottish supporters to vote for a proposal which would extract money from the Scottish taxpayer without returning any equivalent.

Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—The House divided; Ayes, 283, Noes 99.

The announcement of the figures was received with loud Ministerial cheers. (Division List—No. 17—appended.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baden-Powell, Sir Geo. Smyth
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts.)
Bartley, George, C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brown, Alexander H.
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, James A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. (Athole)
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Cox, Robert
Cranbourne, Viscount
Crean, Eugene
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lanc. S. W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dillon, John
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Thomas
Finch, George H.
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fairbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Foster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilhooly, James
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's.)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wdnesbury)
Greville, Captain
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, William Henry
Holdsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessell, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kilbride, Denis
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Knox, Edmund Francis Vesey
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
MacAleese, Daniel
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, John William
M'Calmont, Maj.-Gn. (Ant'm. N)
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian

Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W.F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Miller, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Mount, William George
Murdoch, Charles Townshend
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
O'Niell, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Arthur (Darlington)
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pinkerton, John
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Prettyman, Capt. Ernest George
Purvis, Robert

Rankin, James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Roche, John (East Galway)
Round, James
Russell, Col. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, Sir George (Berkshire)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Saunderson, Col. Edw. James
Savory, Sir Joseph
Scobel, Sir Andrew Richard
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehy, David
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur

Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, John G. (Oxford. Univ.)
Taylor, Francis
Thornburn, Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, John Archibald
Wilson, J. W. (Worc'sh. N.)
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Wortley Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Acland, Rt. Hon. A. H. Dyke
Allen, Wm. (New.-under-Lyme)
Arch, Joseph
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Heny.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Channing, Francis Allston
Colville, John
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Rees- (Pembrokesh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doughty, George
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'on)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir Hnry. (Wol'n)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford

Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffiths, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harrison, Charles
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Holburn, J. G.
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land.)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Sir Leonard
M'Ewan, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Leod, John
Maden, John Henry
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Oldroyd, Mark
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)

Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowden
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Scott, Charles Prestwich
Sinclair, Captain John (Forfar)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Wallace, Robert (Perth)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Woodall, William
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr Thomas Ellis and Mr. R. K. Causton.

MR. SPEAKER: Who will prepare and bring in the Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Gorst, the Solicitor-General, and myself.

Bill to provide for a Grant out of the Exchequer in aid of Voluntary Elementary Schools, and for the exemption from rates of those schools, and to repeal part of Section 19 of The Elementary Education Act 1876; presented accordingly, amid renewed Ministerial cheers, and Read the First time; to be Read the Second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed—[Bill 119.]

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tomorrow.

MOTION.

WORKING MEN'S DWELLINGS (NO. 2).

Bill to facilitate the acquisition by Working Men of their own Dwellings, ordered to be brought in by Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir Howard Vincent, Mr. Heath, Mr. Ernest Spencer, and Mr. Galloway; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 5th May, and to be printed—[Bill 120].

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed; and that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions as shall appear to require it; and that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Biddulph, Major Brymer, Colonel Cotton-Jodrell, Sir Thomas Carmichael, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Mr. George Doughty, Dr. Fox, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Mr. Tollemache, and Mr. Henry J. Wilson.

Ordered, that Three be the quorum—(*Sir Charles Dalrymple*).

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 5th February 1897.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following, namely,

E. Chesterfield,
E. Waldegrave,
V. Oxenbridge,
L. Colville of Culross,

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the Five Lords to form a Select Committee for the Consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to Order).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

Second Reading (which stands appointed for Monday next), put off to Tuesday next.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 5th February 1897.

NEW WRIT.

For the County of Surrey (Chertsey Division), *v.* Charles Harvey Combe, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA.

Special Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read by the Clerk Assistant (Mr. Archibald Milman) as followeth:—

The Select Committee on British South Africa have agreed to the following Resolutions:—

"(i.) That any persons or body deeming themselves interested, who wish to appear by Counsel, shall make application in writing to the Clerk on or before Tuesday next, stating the grounds upon which they desire to appear;

"(ii.) That the Committee propose retaining the conduct of the inquiry referred to them entirely in their own hands, but will accept the assistance of Counsel when they think it necessary;

"(iii.) That all Witnesses, except as hereinafter mentioned, will be called and examined by the Committee;

"(iv.) That if the evidence of any Witness shall affect the interests of any person or body represented by Counsel, application may be made to the Committee for leave to cross-examine such Witness;

"(v.) That if it be desired to call any Witness not examined by the Committee, Counsel must apply for permission to call such Witness, who will be examined as the Committee may think fit;

"(vi.) That the extent to which Counsel may address the Committee will be determined at a later stage of the Inquiry."

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 64.]

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IRELAND).

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to establish the Agricultural Board for Ireland in conjunction with other Dublin Castle Departments, or as a separate and independent Board responsible directly to Parliament?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Pending the introduction of the Bill dealing with the establishment of an Irish Board of Agriculture, I cannot make any statement as to the provisions or scope of the Measure.

POSTAL FACILITIES (COUNTY LONGFORD).

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a memorial has been received from the inhabitants of the parish of Clonbroney, county Longford, signed by several magistrates, clergymen, &c., asking the post office authorities to establish a sub-office at the house of James Donnelly, Moateferrall; and whether, as more than 30 letters per day have for years been left at this man's house the prayer of the memorial will be granted?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. R. W. Hanbury, Preston): A memorial has been received asking for the establishment of a post office at Moateferrall. The matter is being inquired into, and the result shall be communicated to the hon. Member.

EVICTION (COUNTY LEITRIM).

***Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH (Leitrim, N.)**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that Andrew M'Sharry, farmer, of Dargoon, Drumkeeran, county Leitrim, was evicted from his holding on 5th May last, although he offered two years' rent and costs in settlement of the landlord's claim, which offer was refused by the receiver, Mr. Hewson; (2) is he aware that M'Sharry is suffering from bodily infirmity, and that a collection was raised by his neighbours to enable him to make the offer referred to, and that since the eviction the receiver, Mr. Hewson, has let a portion of M'Sharry's holding to a man named Felix Magourty; and (3) whether it is within the competence of the Land Judge's Court to restrain the receiver from pressing the landlord's claim to the extreme limits of the law in a case of such hardship, and where an offer now recognised as fair was made by the tenant?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The fact is as stated in the first paragraph. I cannot say whether a collection was made for M'Sharry. The receiver reports that the alleged offer of two years' rent and costs was not made to him, nor does it appear that M'Sharry is suffering from bodily infirmity. The proceedings by the receiver must have been undertaken by direction of the Land Judge, who has power to approve of any settlement that the tenant may be willing to make.

QUARANTINE.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state the circumstances under which prolonged quarantine was imposed at Durban on the steamships *Courland* and *Naderi*, which recently arrived from Bombay with clean bills of health; whether he is aware that the agents of the steamers protested against such quarantine as illegal; that a riotous demonstration took place to induce certain passengers to return to India, and that these passengers when landing were attacked and threatened with lynching; and whether he will state what steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.): The *Courland* and *Naderi* having arrived at Durban from Bombay, a port infected with plague, were placed in quarantine, and I have no reason to believe that there was any irregularity in the manner in which the quarantine law was enforced. I am not aware whether the ships' agent protested against the quarantine. Upon the arrival of these ships considerable excitement existed at Durban, and meetings were held to protest against the passengers by these ships being allowed to land and to organise a demonstration to prevent their landing. On the day when the ships came into harbour about 5,000 persons assembled and threatened to forcibly prevent the landing, but the authorities induced them to disperse and the landing took place without opposition, except in the case of one person, who was assaulted but not seriously hurt. This incident did not take place at the ordinary landing-place. I have no reason to doubt that the Natal Government will take all possible precautions to prevent any violation of the law should any other ships arrive from Bombay.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could assure the House that there was no reason to think that the responsible authorities of Natal had in any way countenanced the popular movement against the Indian immigrants, and that they would make it clear that the Indian immigrants were entitled to protection like any others of Her Majesty's subjects?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think that is really a proper question to put. The hon. Member is catechising me with regard to the intentions and motives of the Government of a self-governing colony. I have no doubt the Natal Government will do all it ought to do; at the same time, I am not responsible for them. ["Hear, hear."]

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to two telegrams (1) from Gibraltar to the effect that vessels from India will not get pratique there, and will not be allowed to land passengers or goods; mails and specie will be landed in quarantine, and coals and provisions supplied in quarantine; and (2) from Malta that from 6th February inclusive, vessels from India, having no cases of plague or suspected cases of plague on board, will communicate with Commino Island, where passengers can be landed to undergo 21 days' quarantine, their clothes and linen being disinfected, such vessels will coal at Comingott's Islet; and, whether he will communicate with these Crown Colonies with a view to the adoption of more scientific and convenient measures for the protection of public health, and also with the view to prevent an example being set by the Crown Colonies to Foreign Governments calculated to encourage the imposition of restrictions on British commerce?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My attention has been called to the quarantine orders in Gibraltar and Malta referred to in the Question. The Governor of Gibraltar informs me that the stringent regulation adopted there is necessary to prevent quarantine being enforced by Spain against Gibraltar, which would put a stop to the Admiralty work on the harbour. As regards Malta I may refer the hon. Member to my answer to his Question on January 26. I am glad to say that the Colonial Government have to some extent relaxed the stringency of the measures at first adopted, and I trust that, although they are placed in a position of some difficulty by the very strong feeling of the inhabitants of all classes in favour of the antiquated system of strict quarantine, they may be induced by degrees to adopt more enlightened methods of protecting the public health.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT (PARTICULARS SECTION).

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what trades have, since his reply to a question last Session, applied for the extension of Sub-section 6 of Section 40 (the particulars section) of the Factories and Workshops Act of 1895; and, whether any further extension of the sub-section by order has taken place?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): Since my reply to the question asked by my right hon. Friend last June, applications for the extension of this section have been received from the handkerchief and apron makers, the felt-hat makers, the nail and chain makers, and the lock and key makers. In the first of these cases, I have decided to make an order extending the section. The draft has been prepared and will be published immediately. In the other three cases inquiries are still pending.

ROAD CONTRACTS (COUNTY LEITRIM).

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he is aware that Mr. Wilton Waugh, a grand juror of the county of Leitrim, is interested in road contracts in that county; and (2) is it in accordance with the law that a grand juror should be pecuniarily interested in a contract which he has a voice in granting?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed by the secretary to the grand jury that the gentleman named in the Question is not in any way pecuniarily interested in road or other contracts in the county of Leitrim, the expenses of which are payable out of county cess. The reply to the second paragraph is in the negative.

LANE-FOX ESTATE (COUNTY LEITRIM).

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that processes for rent due on the Lane-Fox Estate, in the county of Leitrim, are accustomed to be filled up by clerks in the rent office at Dromahaig, and that legal expenses for such processes have been charged against, and paid by, the tenants; whether he is aware that such a practice is a violation of the rules and regulations of the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland; and will he direct the attention of that body to the system carried on in the rent office referred to?

*The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The practice in the office named is, I believe, as stated in the Question, but I am not sufficiently informed of the facts to enable me to form an opinion whether there is anything illegal in the demand made for costs, which are much less in amount than those receivable if a solicitor were employed. If there be, the tenants have a remedy against the landlord or his clerk. I am not aware whether the practice is a violation of the rules of the Incorporated Law Society, but if it be that body is quite able to take care of its own interests.

Mr. PATRICK M'HUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what is the remedy of the tenants?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND: To sue for the recovery of the costs:

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the County Court judge of Limerick has not had cases of this kind, and—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order; notice must be given of that Question.

CASTLEPOLLARD PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. RICHARD M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Thomas Culligan was recently brought under arrest before a court of petty sessions held at Castlepollard, county Westmeath, presided over by three local justices, charged by the constabulary with the larceny of two calves, also with having the same unlawfully in his possession, and there being no evidence against him, and the owner of the cattle having sworn that the prisoner was a well-known and respectable cattle dealer, and that, having inquired into the matter he believed him to be not guilty of either having stolen them or of having received them knowing them to be stolen, the justices refused to hear the solicitor who represented the accused or the evidence tendered by him, but insisted upon the prisoner giving an undertaking not to take any proceedings against the prosecutor as a condition precedent to refusing informations; and that, upon the prisoner declining to give such, the said justices returned him for trial to quarter sessions at Mullingar, where, after being put to great expense and inconvenience preparing for trial, he was discharged, the county court judge and justices being of opinion there was no case whatsoever against him; whether a resident magistrate will be directed to attend the Castlepollard petty sessions in future; and, whether any means exists of recouping Mr. Culligan the serious expense he has incurred?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The evidence proved against Culligan, was that the cattle had belonged to John Sullivan, that they had been stolen from him, and that a few days afterwards they were found in the possession of Culligan. What Sullivan stated was that he did not believe that Culligan would steal the cattle. The justices did not refuse to hear the solicitor for accused, as alleged, nor is it true that they insisted upon the prisoner giving an undertaking to the effect stated. The jury found that the cattle belonged to Sullivan, but acquitted the accused. The Crown cannot recoup Mr. Culligan the expenses incurred by him in this case. It is the duty of a resident magistrate to attend, so far as his time admits, all petty sessions in his district. The resident magistrate in whose district Castlepollard is situated was on leave of absence when this case was heard at petty sessions, and his *locum tenens* was employed elsewhere on the occasion.

FAIR RENT AGREEMENTS (IRELAND.)

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that the Irish Land Commission refuse to receive and file agreements entered into between landlords and tenants fixing a fair rent for a second statutory term where such agreements have been executed before the expiration of the first statutory term; and (2) whether, in view of the desirability of facilating amicable arrangements between these two classes, he can do anything in the matter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: There is no foundation for the suggestion in the first paragraph. Under Sub-section (6) of Section 8 of the Land Law Act of 1881 such agreements may be entered into during the last 12 months of a statuory term, and the Land Commission have always received agreements fixing a fair rent for a second statutory term which appeared to have been executed during the last 12 months of the first statutory term or after its expiration.

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION (CLONES, COUNTY MONAGHAN.)

MR. D. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that a large proportion of the dwelling-houses in the town of Clones, in county Monaghan, are deficient in ordinary sanitary arrangements and accommodation, and generally unfit for human habitation; and will he send an inspector of the Local Government Board to investigate and report upon this matter, so that in the not unlikely event of the town being visited by an epidemic the officers of health may have a chance of successfully combating the disease?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have received no complaints in this matter, but they have instructed their Medical Inspector to visit Clones and report to them as to the general sanitary condition of the town.

AMALGAMATION OF POOR LAW UNIONS (IRELAND).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he proposes to introduce the Bill dealing with Amalgamation of Poor Law Unions in Ireland; has any commission yet been appointed to consider the subject, and has it made any report; and would he explain the cause of delay?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I hope to be able to introduce this Bill without undue delay, but cannot at present fix the exact date of its introduction. No commission has yet been appointed.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: May I point out to the right hon. Gentleman that that is the same answer he gave twice last Session?

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION (LETTERGULLEN COUNTY LONGFORD).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the Board of National Education have yet decided to erect a new school at Lettergullen, County Longford, in response to an appeal made for increased school accommodation in 1895; whether he is aware that, in consequence of the bad roads and the poverty of the district, numbers of children are at present unable to obtain instruction except that imparted at a night school, and that 94 families are affected by this want; and, if he will request the Board of Education to make a grant for the school in the usual way?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The case of the school to which this question refers was very fully explained by me in answer to a Question put by the hon. Member on the 12th June last. There is no evidence that a new school is required in the locality, four vested school houses having been already established there, with building grants from the Commissioners, and the distances of these schools varies from two-and-a-half to three miles only.

LABOURERS' ACTS (COUNTY LONGFORD).

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board purpose enforcing their compulsory powers, under the recent Acts of Parliament, to provide proper house accommodation for William M'Donnell, of Caldragh Electoral Division, in the

Union of Longford, who has been over ten years striving to get a labourer's cottage built for himself and family.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have not received any application from the person named in the Question since the beginning of 1895. It appeared on communication with the Guardians, that he was then in possession of a substantial house in a state of good repair.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL asked whether it was absolutely necessary to have the advice of the Local Government Board to secure redress?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: That I am unable to say. If he applies to the Local Government Board, no doubt the case will be enquired into.

CHARGE OF LARCENY (COUNTY CORK).

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the arrest of a water bailiff named Sweeny, residing near Banteer, county Cork, on the charge of larceny of a watch; is he aware that the accused was discharged without bail, and an order made that he should be summoned; and, what explanation have the local constabulary authorities to offer why the accused has not been so summoned?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: In this case I am informed that Sweeny upon whom the watch was found, was taken before a Magistrate who discharged him without bail and stated that the owner should take such proceedings as she was advised. The owner refused, however, to take action, and the District Inspector of Constabulary then brought the case before the Magistrates at Kanturk Petty Sessions on the 23rd of January who referred the District Inspector to the Justice before whom the case had been originally brought. The latter did not however, consider the case strong enough for the police to prosecute, as there was no evidence that Sweeny had committed a larceny of the watch, which has been returned to the owner.

ENNISKILLEN FUSILIERS (ENLISTMENT).

Mr. JOHN HAMMOND (Carlow): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War with respect to the case of John Joseph Reilly, a private in the Enniskillen Fusiliers, now stationed at Omagh, who enlisted on 12th January last, and is under the regulation age, being only 16 years old on 28th December last, will he authorise his discharge from the Army, seeing that he is anxious to return to his home to enter upon his father's trade?

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Powell-Williams, Birmingham S.): The youth referred to appears to have been enlisted when under 17 years of age, but he stated his age as over 18 and had all the physical characteristics of that age. No difficulty would be made as to his discharge, but he strongly objects to that course and refuses to return home to his father.

SEED RATE (IRELAND).

Mr. E. CREAN (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution from the Mountmellick Board of Guardians requesting the Board of Works to extend the time for repayment of the seed rate for one year in consequence of the low prices for every description of farm produce; and, whether he will advise the Local Government Board to meet the views of the Guardians in the matter?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: A copy of the resolution in question has been received. The rate to provide for payment of the second instalment of the loan advanced to the Guardians, which amounts to £510 12s. 6d., was assessed on the 19th September last, and as payment of this instalment is not due until the 1st August next, ten months were allowed to the Guardians to collect the rate. There is a balance at present to the credit of the Union of £2,134, and there seems to be no reason why the instalment referred to should not be paid when it becomes due in August.

INLAND MONEY ORDERS.

Mr. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that by the Post Office Official Circular issued on 19th January 1897, under which the charges for ordinary inland money orders for sums not exceeding £1 have been raised from 2d. to 3d., not only causes inconvenience but is open to evasion by the use of postal orders and stamps at a less cost than 3d.; and, whether, if this be the case, he will take steps to secure the rate of commission to what it had been previous to the issue of the Official Circular of 19th January 1897?

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster-General is obliged to the hon. Member for giving him this opportunity of explaining the reasons for the alterations in the money order rates prescribed by the new regulations laid upon the Table of the House on the 27th ult. It was found after careful inquiry that the cost to the State of issuing any money order was not less than 3d., and this conclusion, arrived at after independent inquiry, was in accord with the conclusions of a committee of officials and bankers which sat under the presidency of Mr. George Moore, a well-known merchant, in 1876, and whose report was presented to Parliament at the time. It followed, therefore, as the service had not been conducted at a loss, the remitters of large sums must have been taxed for the assistance of the remitters of small sums. This appeared to the Postmaster-General to be both unjust and unnecessary because Parliament had provided a cheap and convenient means of remitting small sums by postal orders. He cannot, however, regard the use of a postal order as in any sense an evasion of the Money Order Regulations.

MR. LUTTRELL asked, was it not the case that this tended to restrict the use of money orders?

MR. HANBURY said that might be so, but it did not matter to the Post Office. The same difficulty arose under the lower scale, it was quite possible to pay less for a postal order than for a money order.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, having regard to his reply to a question put by the hon. Member for South Islington previous to the Recess, to the effect that the Report of Lord Tweedmouth's Post Office Committee would be laid before Parliament, when such is likely to be the case?

MR. HANBURY: I have already answered similar questions. The Report is involving the consideration of many details, and I do not think it can be presented within a fortnight, at any rate.

ADVANCE TO THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether representations have been made by the French and Russian diplomatic agents at Cairo to the Egyptian Government on the subject of the advance of £500,000 from the British Exchequer; and, if so, what was the effect of those representions?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. G. CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): We understand that official letters have been addressed by the French and Russian Consuls General at Cairo to the Egyptian Government inquiring whether the latter have requested or will accept pecuniary assistance from England, and expressing the opinion that under the terms of previous Decrees such application should be made through the Caisse de la Dette to all the Powers. These letters have not been communicated by either Power to Her Majesty's Government.

MR. MORLEY: Do I understand that Her Majesty's Government are not aware whether an answer has been given?

*MR. CURZON: No, I believe no answer has yet been returned.

RAILWAY EXTENSION (IRELAND).

MR. J. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if Galway county is to be included in the Irish Railway extension scheme of the Government; and, if so, what is to be opened up?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As already explained, I cannot at present make any announcement on the subject, though I may say that negotiations are in progress relative to various schemes.

INDIAN FAMINE.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state the number of deaths from famine officially recorded during the last great famine; whether he will explain according to what test a death was then recorded as caused by famine, and state how many deaths from famine, judged by the same test, have been reported to him during the present famine; and whether he will each week lay upon the Table of the House a statement showing the number of such deaths, if any, in each province?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The estimated abnormal mortality and loss of population (including decrease of births) caused by the famine in 1877-78 was calculated by the Famine Commission to be about 5,850,000. I need not remind the House that any estimate of this kind must necessarily be regarded as approximate only. This particular estimate was arrived at partly by test censuses in typical areas, and partly by a comparison of the number of births and deaths which occurred in given areas during the famine with the normal number of births and deaths for the same areas and for similar periods. The Government of India have been asked to furnish periodical reports of any abnormal mortality which may occur in any part of the present famine area. These reports will be included in the further papers which I propose to lay on the Table at intervals of six weeks so long as the famine lasts. I am afraid that it is impossible for me to undertake more than this.

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS.

MR. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretray of State for the Home Department (1) whether the two men stated in the report of the inspector to have been guilty of irregularities as licensed vivisectors are now in the possession of licences enabling them to perform experiments on the bodies of living animals without anæsthetics, and without being obliged to put the animals to death after the operation; (2) what was the nature of the operation performed by one of these vivisectors before he had obtained a licence; to what penalties did he expose himself by his conduct, and why were not proceedings instituted against him; why were the names of the two vivisectors not published in the report; and (3) will the Home Secretary now declare the names of these persons?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Both the gentlemen referred to now hold licences, one of them with the addition of certificates which enable him to perform experiments without anæsthetics, the other with the addition of certificates which dispense with the obligation of killing the animal after the effect of the anæsthetic has passed off. As regards the second paragraph of the question, both gentlemen held licences at the time of performing the experiments, but had omitted to obtain the certificates which were also necessary under the Act. The experiments were such as would be allowed, and, in fact, have been allowed to be performed by properly qualified persons, and both gentlemen had previously held the certificates which in the cases in question they had omitted to obtain. The penalties are those provided by the Act of 1876, namely, fine for a first offence, fine or imprisonment for subsequent offences. The irregularities were committed before I came to the Home Office, but I see no reason for dissenting from the opinion of my predecessor, that in the particular circumstances the withholding of the licence for a time, and the warning given were sufficient punishment. It was decided on the same ground not to publish the names, and I am not prepared to do so now.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (BUILDING GRANTS).

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (York, W.R. Morley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will grant the Return relating to building grants to public elementary schools which stands on this day's Paper?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University) said he would arrange with the hon. Member as to the form in which the Return could be given.

IMPORTATION OF DRUGS (CEYLON).

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any, and what, steps have recently been taken to restrict the use of hemp drugs and opium in Ceylon; and, whether there are any Papers on the subject which could be presented to Parliament?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Ceylon Government have recently decided, with my approval, to prohibit the importation of hemp drugs in Ceylon and to raise the import duty on opium from one rupee to two rupees per pound.

MR. H. J. WILSON asked if any Papers would be presented on the subject?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said he thought the fact of the decision would be sufficient, and that it was not worth while to publish Papers.

ASSOCIATIONS OF WORKMEN (CONTRACTS).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when Mr. Schloss's Report on Contracts given out by Public Authorities to Associations of Workmen, which was presented in August last, will be issued to Members?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am informed that the Report in question will be issued on Monday next.

POOR LAW SCHOOLS (METROPOLIS).

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now make any statement as to the result of the communications which in July last he stated were proceeding between the Local Government Board and the Education Department respecting the transfer to the latter Department of the duty of inspecting the education in Poor Law Schools?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. HENRY CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): No arrangement for the suggested transfer has as yet been made. The Local Government Board have not filled up the vacancy which has occurred in the office of school inspector for the Metropolitan District; and temporary arrangements until the end of the financial year have been made, pending a final decision on the subject.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked if communications were still proceeding between the Education Department and the Local Government Board.

MR. CHAPLIN: Yes.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether, before he included in his draft order respecting Metropolitan Poor Law Schools children who are remanded to the workhouse by justices, previously to being sent to Industrial School, under Section 19 of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866, he was advised that such children are "Poor," within the meaning of the Metropolitan Poor Act, 1867?

MR. CHAPLIN: The children who are temporarily detained in workhouses, under remand by magistrates, prior to being sent to Industrial Schools, are placed under the charge of the guardians, and whilst they are under their care are maintained at the cost of the rates. I am advised that they are children to whom the provisions of the Metropolitan Poor Act 1867 would apply.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (SALE OF INTOXICANTS).

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the noble Lord the Member for the Westhoughton Division of Lancashire (1) whether the Kitchen Committee have decided to ask the Attorney General to draft a Bill dealing with the illegal sale of liquors at the House of Commons bars; and (2) if so, when the Bill will be introduced?

LORD STANLEY (Lancashire, Westhoughton): The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's question is "Yes"; and the answer to the second part is, "As soon as possible."

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: May I ask the Leader of the House if he will let us have facilities for discussing this Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think I must wait and see.

QUEEN'S REIGN (GIFTS OF REAL PROPERTY).

Sir JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill to extend the powers of limited owners to make gifts of real property for purposes of public education and recreation in furtherance of the National desire worthily to commemorate Her Majesty's long reign?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: However excellent the object which the hon. Gentleman has in view, I could not advise the House to embark upon the discussion of all the interesting and intricate questions that would be raised by such a legislative proposal.

QUEEN'S REIGN (TREASON-FELONY PRISONERS).

Mr. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether Her Majesty's Government will advise Her Majesty the Queen, following the precedent of the Czar of Russia on the occasion of his coronation, to signalise the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne by a liberal exercise of prerogative of pardon in the case of prisoners, more especially of prisoners convicted under the Treason-felony Act?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: If my memory serves me aright, I answered a Question from the hon. Member similar to this a few days ago, and I have nothing to add.

Mr. MACNEILL; No; that was quite distinct.

NECESSITOUS BOARD SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in any Measure which the Government may bring in for giving relief to necessitous Board Schools in England, the Government will introduce the principle, which is of universal application in Scotland, of levying the school rate one half upon the owner and the other half upon the occupier?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: The statement of the law as it obtains in Scotland is, of course, perfectly accurate; but I do not think the occasion for relieving poor Board Schools offers a particularly relevant opportunity for making the change in England even if that change were recognised in the House as in itself desirable.

MOTIONS.

REGISTRATION OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS.

Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Registration of Voters for Parliamentary Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brigg, Sir John Leng, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. George Whiteley, Mr. Strachey, and Mr. Whittaker; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Thursday, 4th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 121.]

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Dane; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Tuesday, 2nd March, and to be printed.—[Bill 122.]

SMALLER DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to amend the Law in reference to the system of House Letting in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir William Arrol, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Colonel Denny, Mr. Faithfull Begg, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Friday, 5th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 123.]

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS.

Bill for the Registration of Firms, ordered to be brought in by Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir John Leng, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Philip Stanhope; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 17th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 124.]

NEW WRIT.

For the Borough of Glasgow (Bridgeton Division) *v.* Sir George Otto Trevelyan, baronet, Manor of Northstead.—(*Mr. Thomas Ellis.*)

SUPPLY (POINT OF ORDER).

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) desired the Speaker's ruling on a point of Order, involving, as he thought, a matter of some importance. On the Order Paper for the day appeared the notice:—

> "Army Estimate, 1896-97 (Suakim Expedition). Supplementary Estimates in the name of the Under Secretary for War."

In the memorandum circulated by command there appeared—

> "Statement of further amount required during the year to meet expenditure not provided for in the original Army Estimates for Suakim Expedition."

In the preceding notice they had under the heading "Civil Services, 1896-97," "Egyptian Expedition (Grant in Aid)." But when he referred to the memorandum which had been equally circulated among Members of the House, he found that this notice was either redundant or misleading. It was a notice regarding the Civil Service Estimates of 1897, but in the memorandum there was not a word as to the Civil Service Estimates of 1897, and, instead of following the example he had quoted with regard to the Supplementary Estimate, when they came to this memorandum they found no reference whatever to any Estimate of the current year at all. It was headed,

> "Estimate of the amount required in the year ending 31st March 1897, as a grant in aid of the expenditure incurred in connection with the Egyptian Expedition to Dongola."

In the Vote in which this sum was accounted for they had no mention of a Civil Service Estimate, but there was an entirely new heading—namely, the heading of "Egyptian Government, £798,802." His first position was that this £798,802 did not even claim to be part of the Estimates of last year or in any way supplemental to those Estimates. It was an entirely new Estimate under an entirely new head. It was not an Army, a Navy, or Civil Service Estimate; it was an Egyptian Government Estimate. He begged respectfully to call attention to the fact that under Standing Order 56 the Speaker was held to have left the Chair on the Estimates for 1896-97, and consequently when a Supplementary Estimate or excess vote came on, Mr. Speaker left the Chair automatically, but his submission was this was not a Supplemental Estimate. It was supplemental to nothing. It was an entirely new kind of Estimate not known before, which was presented to the House for the first time, and consequently it came under the rule relating to a new sum, and before Mr. Speaker could leave the chair it would be necessary to make a Motion to that effect, which would be liable to amendment and debate. His submission was that, although Mr. Speaker was out of the Chair with regard to matters belonging to and growing out of the Estimates of 1896-97, this was not part of those Estimates, and did not claim to be part. It was an Estimate under an entirely new head, and consequently, before going into this matter, a Motion must be made that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has taken two objections. The first is as to the description of the Vote on the Paper. The Vote is, in fact, a Vote for the service of the year ending 31st March 1897, supplemental or additional to those Votes which have been already dealt with for that year, and that it is so sufficiently appears on the Paper. I think there is no doubt that if this, instead of being an additional Estimate, formed part of the original Estimates, it would appear upon the Civil Service Estimates. As regards the suggestion that it is a new matter altogether, and should be dealt with as a separate and original, and not supplemental, Vote, plenty of cases are to be found in which additional Estimates of this kind have been voted by the House upon notices similar to this. In March 1895 there was a grant in aid for Cyprus—a matter upon which there had been no previous opportunity of discussion upon the Estimates. That was brought on in March as an additional Estimate just as this is brought on here. Therefore, as regards that part of the hon. Member's contention the matter is perfectly in order. ["Hear, hear!"] As regards the other point, that there should be a Motion that I now leave the Chair, with opportunity for Debate before I leave the Chair, I think that objection also is groundless. The Standing Order 56, to which the hon. Member refers, expressly says that,

> "Whenever Committee of Supply stands as an Order of the Day on Monday or Thursday,"

or now, under the Sessional Order, on Friday, "Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without question put." To-day, Committee of Supply is an Order of the Day, and therefore Standing Order compels me to leave the Chair without question put. The invariable practice has been, that when the Motion has been carried that "Mr. Speaker now leave the Chair" upon first going into the Estimates, any additional or supplementary Vote in Committee of Supply afterwards for a further expenditure in that year, is put to the Committee without the question being put that I leave the Chair. Therefore I think the notice and procedure are quite in order, and I shall now leave the Chair without putting any question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

[The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES, 1896-7.

EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed:—

> "That a sum, not exceeding £798,802, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for a Grant in Aid of the Expenditure incurred in connection with the Egyptian Expedition to Dongola."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.), who was received with Ministerial cheers, said: Before I state to the Committee the reasons which have induced Her Majesty's Government to make the proposal which has been read from the Chair, I should like to inform the Committee what is the actual cost of what may be properly called the Egyptian expedition to Dongola. I do not include in that cost the sum of £145,000 which, as the Committee will see, stands in a subsequent Estimate for garrisoning Suakim and neighbouring places by the Indian troops. That is an item which has nothing to do with the Egyptian Government, except, of course, that the services which the Indian troops were thus able to render were of very great importance and usefulness to the Egyptian Government in successfully carrying on the Dongola campaign. ["Hear, hear!"] But I think the Committee will feel that under any circumstances it would not have been right for us to have imposed that expenditure upon the Government of Egypt. [*Cheers.*] Therefore it is proposed now as a separate Vote altogether, and has no reference to the expenditure which I am about to explain to the Committee. The cost of the expedition, properly so called, was £733,000. That included the extension of the railway and telegraph from Sarras to Abu Fatmeh, on the way to Dongola, of £185,000 and also the cost of the gunboats purchased for the purposes of the expedition. I need not remind the Committee that both these items are, so to speak, still to the good and will render valuable service in the future. ["Hear, hear!"] They altogether form nearly one-third of the total cost of the expedition. The cost of the expedition in another and more important way was, I think, equally small when compared with the results achieved. No more out of the whole Egyptian force than 47 persons were killed in action, 235 fell victims to cholera, and rather more than 100 to other forms of disease during the months the campaign lasted. Probably with regard to that latter point, as many lives would have been lost if the troops had remained at home. I do not think that any more complete success was ever obtained by any expedition that was ever undertaken. [*Cheers.*] I do not say this as wishing to take any credit whatever to Her Majesty's Government. The credit is due, of course, to Sir Herbert Kitchener—[*cheers*]—and the gallant officers and men under his command, and last, but by no means least, to Lord Cromer and the authorities at Cairo. [*Cheers.*] I think when we compare the cost which I have quoted with the anticipations which were held out upon the subject to Parliament last spring, there is a good deal to be said, or rather a good deal that might be said. I remember that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs told us, in so many words, that the Cabinet must have gone mad in sanctioning this expedition. I remember that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, in a Debate upon the Budget, criticised me very severely for not having made any special provision for this expenditure. But why? Because he said that in the year 1884 Parliament had to be called together in the autumn to increase the income tax by 1½d. in the pound in order to pay the expenditure then incurred in the Soudan, and again in the year 1885 a Vote of Credit of no less than £4,500,000 was taken for the same purpose, when the Sinking Fund had actually to be suspended in order to provide it. Those were the anticipations the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite held out to the country last spring as the probable expenditure upon this campaign. Those expectations have been absolutely falsified. One thing, and one thing alone, has proved correct, that is, the anticipation that I should be called upon to ask this House to vote a certain sum of money. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton said that if history repeated itself in policy it would also in cost. I ventured then to say that history had not repeated itself in policy, that we and the Egyptian Government had taken warning by the occurrences of 1884 and 1885, and the manner in which this expedition had been planned, and the mode in which it had been conducted, were not the same as the policy of those days, and that therefore the result would be very different. But I should like to point out to the Committee that if the anticipations which I had every right to form at that date had been realised I should not have had to ask the House to vote a single penny of the cost of the expedition. I have said it has cost £733,000. As the Committee will recollect, £512,500 in English currency was advanced by the Commission of the Caisse to the Egyptian Government for the purposes of the Dongola expedition. That sum, together with the surplus fund at the disposal of the Egyptian Government, would have practically enabled it to have defrayed all the cost of the expedition. The Committee are well aware why it is I stand before them asking for this Vote. The decision at which the Commission of the Caisse arrived—that this expedition was, so to speak, extraordinary expenditure, which they were justified in aiding by a grant from the reserve fund at their disposal—was set aside by the Mixed Court of Appeal in Egypt, and the Egyptian Government were directed to repay the Caisse the sum advanced, with interest. That sum, as the Committee will see in the Paper that has been circulated, amounts to £528,000, and as soon as that decision had been arrived at by the Court, as soon as the Egyptian Government had intimated—and I think it was quite right to intimate—that having agreed to abide by the jurisdiction of the Court it was bound to carry out its judgment, and therefore to repay the money, we lost not a day in informing the Egyptian Government that we would, as far as we were concerned, hold them harmless in the matter—[*cheers*]—and ask Parliament to recoup them the expenditure they had to repay. I do not wish—I could not speak with authority—to say anything as to the legal merits of the judgment of the Mixed Court of Appeal. The view of the Egyptian Government and their legal advisers has been ably set out in the Papers presented to the House. But, I am bound to say that, in my opinion, a situation has been created in Egypt, by that decision, of a remarkable kind. The Committee are well aware that the Egyptian Government is practically, in financial matters, in leading strings under the authority of the Great Powers, and that authority is largely exercised by the Commission of the Caisse (which is a Commission composed of the representatives of the Great Powers), and among the duties specially delegated to that Commission was the duty of receiving a certain portion of the annual surplus accruing to the Egyptian Government and devoting it to a reserve fund for unforeseen contingencies, primarily, I suppose, in the interests of the bondholders. But they were specially authorised to devote from time to time, on the application of the Egyptian Government, a portion of that reserve fund to meeting any extraordinary expenditure which might be required by that Government beyond the ordinary expenses of the Budget of the year. Acting on that authority, which was specially vested in them by the Great Powers whom they represent, the Commission of the Caisse by a majority (as they have often decided before by a majority) voted £512,000 to the Egyptian Government. After considering the matter, they deliberately resolved that the expedition to Dongola might properly be included among the extraordinary expenditure to which the reserve fund might properly be devoted. But what has been the decision of the Mixed Court of Appeal? That Court, acting, as far as I can understand, upon the view that there is a certain difference between the terms of the decree of 1876 and the Law of Liquidation of 1880—a difference which Lord Cromer, who himself took part in drawing up the Law of Liquidation of 1880, asserts to his own knowledge was not a real difference, but a mere drafting difference not intended to make any real difference at all—acting, I say, upon that view, the Mixed Court of Appeal have decided that any one member of the Commission of the Caisse might appeal to them against the decision of all the rest of the members of the Commission, and might thus enable this Mixed Court of Appeal—which itself is the creature of the Great Powers in Egyptian affairs—to override and set aside the decision, all but unanimous, of the Commission of the Caisse on a matter which was specially entrusted to them by the Great Powers. [*Cheers.*] The decision seems to me to be almost absurd. Here is a reserve fund which, at the time of the Dongola expedition, amounted to £2,750,000. A considerable part of it was not needed for any other purpose. It had been accumulated by the wise financial administration of the Egyptian Government acting under our advice. Its very existence was due to no other cause. ["Hear, hear!"] The Egyptian Government decided that it was necessary that part of this fund should be applied to the cost of the Dongola expedition. We, who are responsible after all for the safety of Egypt—a responsibility in which no other Power shares with us anything at all—[*loud cheers*]—we supported the view of the Egyptian Government. The majority of the Great Powers took the same view, but the whole thing is overturned and set aside by the decision of the Mixed Court of Appeal. I am bound to say that, in my opinion, when next year the time arrives at which the constitution and the powers of these Mixed Courts have to be reconsidered, a very grave question ought to and must arise as to what shall be their powers and authority in the future—[*cheers*]—and whether they shall be allowed in this way to interfere in affairs which have been deliberately entrusted by the Great Powers to another tribunal altogether. That is for the future. For the present the Egyptian Government had no option but to repay this money, and we felt that we had no option but to recoup them. The terms upon which we have made the advance are these. We have made an agreement with the Egyptian Government that while the advance is outstanding—and in the advance I include £270,000 included in the estimate to which I will subsequently allude—while the advance is outstanding they shall pay 2¾ per cent. interest on the money, being the same rate paid on our own Funds, and that it shall rest with the two Governments from time to time to agree as to the repayment by the Egyptian Government of the capital sum by such instalments as may be found possible and convenient. ["Hear, hear!"] The Egyptian Government have willingly accepted that proposal. [*Opposition laughter.*] I hear a suggestion that it is not surprising that they should. The hon. Member for Northampton will probably find fault with me for advancing the money on too easy terms. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: "No."] He may say there is no technical security. That is perfectly true. Owing to their financial fetters the Egyptian Government are unable to give any such technical security. But we have the word of the Egyptian Government, which we trust, and we have this further fact—that we are in occupation of Egypt —[*laughter and cheers*]—and the fact that we have been compelled to make this advance, through, certainly no fault or action of our own, is, I think, rather likely to prolong that occupation. [*Renewed cheers and laughter.*] I have no doubt that will be regarded by Gentlemen opposite with great objection. I have never concealed my own opinion that if you regard the occupation of Egypt solely as an abstract question there is not a little to be said against the advantages of that occupation to this country. But the matter has long passed beyong the region of abstract questions. Owing to a long chain of events, for which no Minister and no Government can be held specially responsible, Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues were forced into the occupation of Egypt. From that day to this, though Governments have been in office whose leading members ardently desired that that occupation should cease, this country has never been able to terminate it either with honour or safety. What is the main cause of the prolongation of that occupation to the present day and the probability of its prolongation much longer than was anticipated? I believe mainly this—that France, especially, has never allowed us a free hand in Egypt.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Why should she? [*Opposition cheers.*]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Why should she? Because she voluntarily declined to join us in going to Egypt, and she cast upon us by that act the sole responsibility for the safety of Egypt, and I have always felt that we might justly have demanded that we should have a free hand to perform that responsibility. But there is one thing to be said. I cannot understand how anyone who objects to allowing the Egyptian Government to use half a million of its own surplus—which is not wanted for any other purpose—in the recovery of its lost province of Dongola, and insists that the Egyptian Government shall be bound hand and foot by financial fetters, which prevent it from profiting by those conversion economies which are due to its admirable financial administration—I cannot understand how anyone who holds the view that the Egyptian Government must continue to be so fettered, can at the same time contend that Egypt is fit to stand alone. I do not wish to dwell more on the past or even the present. Now I come to say something as to the future. Of course, the fact that the Egyptian Government has been refused permission to use its own surplus in this way has an important effect on the financial situation, and we have had very carefully to consider whether we should sanction a further advance in the policy which was adopted last year, or whether that policy should be reversed. What was our policy last year? It was, for reasons which seemed to us sufficient, the restoration to civilisation of the province of Dongola. ["Hear, hear!"] But since that expedition was undertaken we have never concealed, either from Parliament or from the country, that in our view there should be a further advance in the same direction—[*cheers*]—and that Egypt could never be held to be permanently secured so long as a hostile power was in occupation of the Nile Valley up to Khartoum. [*Cheers.*] We have had to consider whether that policy should still be pursued. I think there is one thing of which we and others may be quite certain. If we believe any policy to be right with reference to Egypt this country will not be worried out of it—[*cheers*]—by hindrances and difficulties such as the refusal of this money. [*Cheers.*] We believe that the policy is right, and we intend that it shall be still pursued. [*Cheers.*] But we intend that it shall be pursued prudently and gradually, for it certainly would not be either to the political or financial advantage of Egypt that more territory should be restored to her than she can properly administer or properly defend, and, therefore, what we propose is that the policy shall be continued in the coming season first of all by an advance to a very important point of the Nile called Abu Hamed, which lies to the north-east of the extreme limits of the present province of Dongola. I ought to say, however, that that advance will be an Egyptian advance. Hon. Members, no doubt, will remember the rumours that were spread about widely last year as to the enormous preparations that were being made in this country for expeditions to the Soudan and other matters of that kind. The same rumours have been repeated, and the names of eminent commanders have been suggested for the work. These rumours now are as void of any foundation as the rumours were last year. [*Cheers.*] This is to be as that was, an Egyptian advance in the first place to Abu Hamed, and afterwards possibly beyond. [*Cheers.*] How far I do not think it right to say. But this I will say, that in our opinion the main work to be done in the coming season should be, firstly, the consolidation and connection of the districts already under the dominion of theKhedive; and secondly, the acquisition of important strategical positions which may be of the utmost value in the future. [*Cheers.*]

We propose to contribute to the work to the extent that has been named in the Estimate—£270,000. How is that money to be expended? It is to be expended in purchasing material for a light railway between Wady Halfa and Abu Hamed across the chord of the great bend of the Nile, along a route which for generations has been the main caravan road from Cairo to the interior of Africa. The Egyptian Government will construct that railway, and they will bear all the other expenses that are likely to be incurred in the coming season. I have had conferences both with Sir Herbert Kitchener and with Mr. Dawkins, of the Egyptian Financial Department, and I have satisfied myself both as to the nature of the operations to be undertaken, their probable cost, and the means of the Egyptian Government to meet them; and I can state that it is not in our contemplation to ask Parliament during 1897 for any further expenditure in this matter than that which is now proposed. We believe that in the policy which I have indicated and in the Vote which we propose towards carrying it out we shall be meeting the desires of the great majority of the people of this country. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LABOUCHERE asked what the total cost of the railway was estimated to be.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That I am not prepared at the moment to tell the hon. Member. But the main cost of these railways is always the material, and the vote which we propose will be for all the material required for the railway. That line, we believe, will not only be of very great value for military purposes in the comparatively near future, it will, we hope, some day be a commercial highway of great importance between Egypt and the interior of Africa. [*Cheers.*] I do not suppose that I shall be able to convince right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have always consistently opposed this policy, that we are right in our belief that it is necessary for the security of Egypt that a hostile Power should not permanently be situated at Khartoum or that we have acted wisely in undertaking this task; but I think I may venture to appeal to hon. Members who approved of our policy last year whether the result of that policy—whether the success of that expedition in the manner which I have described does not justify them in reposing in us confidence for the future. [*Cheers.*] There is one word I would venture to say even to the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, in speaking on the Address in answer to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, was good enough to compliment me on the possession of common sense in this matter. But, then, he went on to say that I had deviated into philanthropy. Has philanthropy no claims upon us in this matter? [*Cheers.*] I do not wish to underrate any of our responsibilities, let us say for the Armenians or for any of the subjects of the Sultan of Turkey. But these responsibilities are not nearly so great or so special as our responsibility for the inhabitants of the Soudan. This country solely, deliberately, and, I think, unwittingly compelled the Egyptian Government to abandon the Soudan. Our people were told at the time by Mr. Gladstone and others, who, I have no doubt, believed it, that it was a proper thing to relieve the inhabitants of the Soudan, who were rightly struggling to be free, from the tyranny of the Egyptian Government. But what do we see now? From the reports of those who have been so unfortunate as to be prisoners of the Khalifa; from the condition to which the once fertile province of Dongola has been reduced under that Government; from the delight of the population at welcoming back that Egyptian Government who were supposed to appear to them in the light of tyrants; we may be quite sure that there never was a case in any part of the world in which an unfortunate and helpless population groaned under a more ruthless, more barbarous, and more fanatical tyranny than the peaceful inhabitants of the Soudan under the rule of the Khalifa. [*Cheers.*] Is it because the skins of these men are black, is it because the religion is Mohamedan, that the claims of humanity, which were so strong with the right hon. Member for Montrose in the matter of Armenia, are nothing to us now? [*Cheers.*] I will not believe it. I am no believer in the mission, even of so powerful a country as this, to redress the wrongs of humanity all over the world. But here is a case in which the task is ready to our hand. Here is a case in which, as the right hon. Gentleman himself has said, there is reason to believe that this baleful power of the Khalifa is of itself crumbling to decay. Here is a case in which we may fulfil that responsibility which undoubtedly rests upon us. I believe the great majority of our people will desire that that task should be undertaken and that responsibility fulfilled. [*Cheers.*]

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I think no one in the House will conceal from himself the gravity of some of the language which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers.*] I should have thought that if ever there was a moment at which it was most desirable not to allow a whisper to fall that might break the harmony amongst the European Powers, this was the moment. [*Cheers.*] If ever there was a moment when neither by word nor by act should you increase the irritation felt notoriously in some quarters, I should have thought that this was the moment. [*Cheers.*] How can the right hon. Gentleman suppose that the language that he used in the earlier part of his remarks about the action of France and Russia in relation to the affair of the Caisse can be regarded as anything but a direct, and I venture to think, a most imprudent challenge to these Powers to question the sincerity of our plea for remaining in Egypt—a direct challenge to them to take up a new position? The First Lord of the Treasury, the Secretary for the Colonies, and other Gentlemen opposite have done us the justice to say that since the present Government has been in office we on this side have been scrupulously careful to use no language and take no action that should in any way multiply difficulties or make embarrassments for Her Majesty's Government in respect of foreign policy. Have they done us that justice? I hope they will believe that in the remarks which I have already made, and in those which I shall proceed to make, there is no desire whatever to take party advantage of those most delicate and dangerous transactions. It is impossible to deny that the position in Egypt is, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said, an absurd position, that it is of a very intolerable character, and so on; but it is precisely because we hold that view, because we hold that the position is absurd in its present attitude towards France and other Powers in respect of Egypt, that we question the expediency of an indefinitely prolonged occupation there; and that is the very foundation of our case. [*Cheers.*] That is our general case; and I am not now going into the general question of the occupation of Egypt, because after all the general question is entirely secondary, and merely incidental to the particular question which we are called upon to discuss this afternoon. But it makes me wonder the more that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is generally distinguished by strong common sense, should have gratuitously and without occasion raised it, not only for our consideration, but for the consideration of foreign Powers who think themselves interested in the large general question. I will only say this upon it. I know many hon. Gentlemen opposite think that those who hold the view that the time may come when we shall have done our work in Egypt, and who question the expediency of the expedition to Khartoum, are almost guilty of high treason. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*] I confess that I have never heard upon the general question a full, an intelligent, and a deliberate statement, either on this side of the House or on that of the precise gains which the people of Great Britain get out of our occupation of Egypt. I am not saying that is the only view that ought to be taken. We have responsibilities there which we cannot avoid; I know it full well, and I have no desire to evade them; but if you are going to raise, as the right hon. Gentleman has done, the general question, I do hope the House and our constituents will ask explicitly and plainly what are the advantages we are to gain from an indefinite, prolonged occupation of Egypt against the consent of some of those who, rightly or wrongly, think themselves interested. That is a question well worth considering and discussing, and I expect that, after a few weeks are over, after the language of the right hon. Gentleman, it is a question which will be unpleasantly forced upon us. As to the prophecies of last year, the right hon. Gentleman was very magnanimous, or at least thought himself so, when he said that he had no desire to recall them and their falsification which events had brought about. The right hon. Gentleman reminded the Committee that I had used the word "madness" in connection with the action of Her Majesty's

Government in undertaking the Dongola expedition. But I am not yet repentant for the use of that word. I am by no means repentant, because it is perfectly clear that what we foresaw last year is going to come true, and the Dongola expedition is now avowed to be the first step of a large, prolonged, costly, and dangerous set of operations which it is nothing short of madness in the present position of the world for the Government gratuitously and without any active occasion to plunge into. [*Cheers.*] We were not the only persons who prophesied last year. We were assured last year by, I think, every hon. Gentleman who spoke from the Bench opposite that this expedition was to be an Egyptian expedition, conducted by the forces of Egypt alone, and to be defrayed out of the resources of Egypt alone. There was your error, which we pointed out at the moment. You have forgotten when going into the prophecies which you think have been falsified that there were other warnings and remonstrances used. I particularly made a pointed charge that you had embarked on this enormous enterprise, so far as we knew, without making sure that you carried the Powers with you, and especially one particular Power. Then the First Lord of the Treasury said,

> "That is not so; we have no reason to suppose that the Powers make any objection to the step on which we have embarked."

The Colonial Secretary used language of the same kind on the same occasion, and, I think, the Chancellor of the Exchequer also. But it is now clear that our warning, our prophecy if you like, in March last was abundantly justified. The very circumstance that has compelled you to come to the House to-day to ask the sanction of the House for this advance, as you call it, exactly shows that our warning was well inspired, that your confidence that you had the Powers with you and carried them along with you, sanctioning, approving, and aiding this expedition, was entirely wrong, and—most important point of all—of the prophecies made last year your prohecies have been falsified, and not ours. [*Cheers.*] Nothing could be more explicit. There was the confident language used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that Egypt would be able to defray the expenses of the expedition and that no penny would come out of the pockets of the British taxpayer. He has referred to the discussion that took place between my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton and himself across the table, but he did not quote the strongest and most definite expression of my right hon. Friend's opinion. My right hon. Friend said,

> "If the Committee think that Egypt is going to pay when all is done, they will be very gravely disappointed. Sooner or later England will have to pay, for the policy that has been adopted is yours, and the initiative is yours."

[*Cheers.*] Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer got up and said, "The Egyptian Government have undertaken this expedition"—what a farce it is to talk of the Egyptian Government; all through the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech to-night he made me smile when he spoke of the Egyptian Government undertaking this or that, because it means Her Majesty's Government and no other—

> "With their own forces and at their own cost. . . It is probable that some charge may be imposed upon us in connection with the dispatch of special service officers in the movement of the British troops now in Egypt, but I, at any rate, have no reason to anticipate that any of the terrible prognostications of the right hon. Gentleman will be fulfilled."

Does the right hon. Gentleman now contend that my right hon. Friend made a false prophecy when he said "sooner or later England will have to pay?" The Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us—the particulars are not over full, but they are still sufficient—the conditions under which that advance has been made. As I understand it, £733,000 has been advanced. ["No, no!"]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: £733,000 was the total cost of the expedition.

MR. J. MORLEY: Then £528,000 has been advanced at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. interest, to be paid, I suppose, in the ordinary way, and the principal to be repaid in instalments as may be convenient to the Egyptian Government. But I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman expects the Egyptian Government to make provision for the repayment of the instalments. No date is fixed when the Egyptian Government are to repay. I wonder how the Egyptian Government, which, remember, has no money to spare from current purposes, is to be expected to be ever able to repay those instalments. I do not believe that money has ever been advanced on security so childish as this, because we all know that the Egyptian Government will not be able, without starving those services which we are proud to see undertaken for the benefit of the people of Egypt, to repay those instalments. [*Cheers.*] Why do you not have the courage of your own policy and say to the House: "It is our policy; the initiative was ours; all these philanthropic pretensions which we make are ours; we will pay for them?" Surely, if all those operations are to be undertaken for the satisfaction, as the right hon. Gentleman has told us, of our own philanthropic instincts, it is rather hard that Parliament should be called upon to pay £500,000 for the past satisfaction of our philanthropy, and to advance a number of half-millions of money before those operations come within sight of a close. [*Cheers.*] I do not know why in this Estimate the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not add the £145,000 to be repaid to the Government of India for the extra expenses, and which are to be left out of the cost of the operations. ["Hear, hear!"] If those expenses were added, the public at home would see what the real cost of this expedition has been. It has been over £900,000; and the arguments used in defence of that expenditure, if they are to be worth anything at all, are arguments why the British taxpayer should find the money and why we should not go through this empty formality of veiling it under the form of "an advance." Let us look at the pleas which the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends advance for what has been done. The first was the defence of the frontier. It now appears that the frontier was in no sort of danger. The second plea was that the primary object of the operations, as Lord Cromer called it, was to relieve the Italian army from pressure at Kassala, and so prevent the possibility of that place falling into hostile hands. But there is a great deal of evidence to show that, though the Italian Government in the first instance did, no doubt, press Her Majesty's Government to render them some aid, the Italian Government and their military officers on the spot desired nothing so much as to leave Kassala and evacuate the territory round about it at the very moment when Her Majesty's Government were saying that the relief of the Italians was one of their great objects. It is very difficult to suppose that anything could have happened in Kassala after the Italians evacuated it, as they desired to do, which would have affected that policy. The third plea was that the "fertile granary of Dongola was to be added to the Egyptian territory." Now, this year, we have got an entirely different set of arguments. The old arguments are all dropped, because everyone can see how hollow they were. The first of the new arguments is that we are going to continue these operations in order "to avenge the follies of our old Soudan policy." Lord Cromer, I think, used language about "the shade of Gordon beckoning us on to Khartoum." And Lord Salisbury, in another place, said that our object under this head was "to efface" what had taken place 12 or 13 years ago. But there again, if you are going to avenge your own follies, you ought surely to pay. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not understand upon what principle the people of Egypt, the Egyptian Treasury, is to be loaded for the present, and with the prospect of an indefinite load for the future, in order to avenge our policy. The second new argument is that we are going up the Nile in order to "extirpate a vile and cruel despotism, compared with which the worst performances of the Palace at Constantinople are bright and saintly deeds." Then, thirdly, the occupation of Dongola is justified because it is "on the highway to Khartoum." Does it not strike the House, as I am sure it will strike the country, as a most ambiguous and equivocal course, that while we had one set of arguments for the Dongola expedition last year we now have another set of arguments used retrospectively about the Dongola expedition and prospectively as to projected expeditons to places named by the right hon. Gentleman on the way to Khartoum? But we are not to stop even at Khartoum. The First Lord of the Treasury carries us still further. I confess I heard his language with considerable alarm on the opening night of the Debate on the

Address. The right hon. Gentleman said on that occasion:—

> "We hold that the position of Egypt cannot be regarded as satisfactory until the control of the country over large parts at all events of the Soudan has been re-established."

["Hear, hear!" from the FIRST LORD of the TREASURY.] We are not to stop at Khartoum, and I am glad the right hon. Gentleman cheers that.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not quite follow. I made no geographical limitations.

MR. J. MORLEY: But surely going to Khartoum is one thing, and acquiring control over large parts of the Soudan when you get to Khartoum is another. And I think the right hon. Gentleman is right in using wider language than was used by the Prime Minister and even that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For when you get to Khartoum, what will you have to do? Undoubtedly your first task will be solidly to establish an Egyptian Administration there. Do you suppose, when you have got an Egyptian Administration there, that there will be no frontier difficulties? It is as certain as anything can be that the old difficulties and conditions will return, and I was glad that the right hon. Gentleman frankly faced that and was prepared not only to admit that the policy of the Government is to go to Khartoum, but all the liabilities which going to Khartoum will involve. The Secretary for the Colonies last year distinctly said that if Egyptian statesmen had their way, or were able freely to declare their opinion and judgment, they would not be content, or Egypt could not be regarded as secure and as possessing full guarantees of prosperity, unless they had their old Soudanese territory restored to them in its entirety. Having regard to all the facts and forces of the situation, I greatly fear an extension of your operations will be forced upon you by the necessities of the case. The Chancellor of the Exchequer twitted us with being deaf to the claims of philanthropy and humanity in dealing with these unfortunate people, and said—How is it you can be so anxious about Armenians while you forget the victims of worse despotism in the Soudan? There is no discrepancy whatever between the attitude taken by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House and in both Parties as to Armenia, and the position taken with regard to the Khalifa. When you taunt us with being deficient in philanthropy, with being indifferent to the fate of these unfortunate people, I would remind you of the language used by Lord Salisbury only nine years ago. On March 16, 1888, in another place, Lord Salisbury said:—

> "We do not depart in any degree from the policy of leaving the Soudan."

and with regard to the question of restoring the country to civilisation declared that that

> "could only be carried out by a large and costly expedition, entailing an enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure, and for the present a continuous expenditure."

[*Ministerial cheers.*] The question of humanity must, after all, be settled; your decision must be guided by considerations of policy, and you may depend upon this, that you will not carry out your expedition to Khartoum and all your operations incident thereto without inflicting an amount of suffering, and perhaps causing an amount of disorder and chaos which will far outweigh any advantages you have got out of your present partial, and possibly temporary, expedition. As far as the Armenians are concerned, there you had definite responsibilities which were imposed upon you by your own action. I am not one of those who desire to carry out all these obligations regardless of all the diplomatic and military hazards which might befall. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I desire that England should take her share in putting down desperate atrocities in Armenia, but I hold she should, at all events, choose her time for executing these humane and philanthropic operations in the Soudan. This is the point which I have strongest in my mind, that you could not possibly have chosen a more inopportune moment than you took last year and than you are taking now for these operations. The House will remember the language of the Queen's Speech with regard to the condition of affairs abroad and the language of the Colonial Secretary as to the anxieties of his own Department, and yet this very moment, when there is good ground—I do not say for anything like alarm, but for anxiety and circumspection—this is the moment at which you announce a policy which, if carried out, will have military effects which will certainly involve locking up a considerable, probably a great, body of troops and will also involve you in diplomatic difficulties; this very moment when you know, we all know, that we are within sight and measurable distance of new conditions of sea-power, new conditions in regard to the balance of marine power in the Eastern Mediterranean—this is the moment which you choose to take a step which will endanger more than ever it has been endangered before your military and naval policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, and which will make it more difficult to readjust that policy, as undoubtedly it will be found necessary in some respects to do, and this change is announced in language the most inopportune and imprudent. [*Cheers.*] Under cover of your military success in the Dongola expedition—a success which, from a military point of view, we all admire, whether we approve or disapprove of the expedition—under cover of the natural satisfaction and exultation which it has created inside and outside the House, you are embarking upon a policy which has been before now repudiated and condemned not only by Mr. Gladstone, but by the present Prime Minister himself. [*Cheers.*] I do not want to say more. I have been for about 12 or 13 years from time to time raising protests — unsuccessfully, I admit — against this Soudan policy. But I have not been wholly unsuccessful. We withdrew from the Soudan policy of Mr. Gladstone in 1885; and that withdrawal was entirely approved of by Lord Salisbury himself. Not only that, but in 1887, remember, he took steps which, if the French and Turkish Governments had been wiser, would have terminated our occupation of Egypt. ["Hear, hear!"] After all this, it is deplorable to see steps being boldly announced, and likely to be taken, which will embark us on what I think to be a series of costly, perilous, and thankless operations. [*Cheers.*] And, quite apart from the thanklessness, the cost, and the bloodshed involved, these operations are to take place at a moment in the history of the world and of diplomatic relations when they must be fraught with the gravest risks. We shall be very fortunate if we escape from them—for they will be long operations—without repulses and humiliations of which what happened the other day in the affair of the Caisse was only a beginning. ["Hear, hear!"] I put a question to-day to the Under Secretary as to the action taken two days ago by the Governments of France and Russia. The right hon. Gentleman informed us that the Russian and French Consul Generals had told the Egyptian Government that, if they wanted an advance, their business was to get it from the Caisse, and that they had no right, according to the law, to take the advance directly from Great Britain. I express no opinion as to their legal position; but the House will feel, I am sure, that the fact that such action has been taken by France and Russia at this moment—though not, perhaps, momentous in itself—is a sufficient indication of the temper of the Powers with which we have to deal—a temper which will not, I fear, be improved by what has taken place in this House this afternoon. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said that everyone now knew where the £120,000 promised to the Voluntary Schools had gone. It had gone into the sands of the Soudan. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had quoted some of the pledges given on this subject last year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But he had not quoted the strongest words of all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was pressed over and over again to say whether Parliament would be asked for money in connection with this expedition in the present year. The right hon. Gentleman was warned as to the probability of a difficulty in connection with the Caisse; and yet he insisted on replying that he had no reason to expect that any call would be made on Parliament in the present year, except for the salaries of a few special service officers. "There would be no obligation to provide any large expenditure." Now the right hon. Gentleman came down with the cheerful announcement practically that an expedition was going to Khartoum. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, the expedition was going forward, and the opinion and intention of Her

Majesty's Government were that eventually the expedition would reach Khartoum. The right hon. Gentleman said it was an Egyptian expedition; but the expedition which the House was now asked to pay for was also an Egyptian expedition. The graver part of the case was that the right hon. Gentleman had entirely departed from the past policy of prudent Leaders of the Conservative Party on this question. He said that we were not going to be worried into leaving Egypt. It was quite proper not to be worried into anything opposed to our interests; but the Government had declared over and over again that the occupation of Egypt was contrary to our military interests, and, in the words twice expressly approved by Lord Salisbury, was "a burdensome drain" on us. It really looked as though the Government had been worried into remaining in Egypt against the dictates of wisdom and prudence. The statement that what had occurred was likely to prolong our occupation, made in the menacing language and in the formidable and distinct manner adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was, he feared, a declaration that the policy of the Conservative Party on this question had changed since 1888. A very important book had recently appeared by Sir G. Clarke and Mr. Thursfield, and in the introduction to that book the authors jointly signed a statement discouraging the idea that the occupation of Egypt could be in any way a strength to this country. The Under Secretary had hitherto been inclined to go beyond the other Members of the Government in his defence of this policy of remaining in Egypt. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman in bringing the other Members of the Government gradually into agreement with him. But the right hon. Gentleman had gone out of his way to attack him and the right hon. Member for Montrose during the Recess for their statements on this question last year. Personally he wished to say that he adhered to every word that he said last year on this question, because he believed his predictions as to the nature of this expedition were being completely justified. He said then that if the expedition were merely going 200 miles it was doing what was not necessary for the defence of Egypt; that, "elated by apparent success at first, the expedition would be pressed on to Khartoum and Darfur, and that ultimately a British force would have to be sent." He did not believe in these alarming reports as to the dangers to Egypt which were conjured up last year. Let the Committee remember the extreme variety of the excuses which had been made for this expedition. Last year it was said that the Egyptian frontier at Wady Halfa was indefensible and liable to Dervish raids, which were a positive danger to Egypt. The Government were told, when they said this, that the present frontier would be still less defensible. They had the Sirdar now declaring that the present frontier was no better than the old; that Dongola was a province that would be subject to raids, and that the Egyptian Army had been increased by four battalions, two squadrons, and one battery for the purpose alone of holding Dongola. Did not that confirm the statement which had frequently been made on the Opposition side that the occupation of the province was never likely to be anything else but a serious drain on the finances of Egypt? It was first said that the object of the expedition was to help Italy out of her difficulties in Abyssinia. There was no evidence that the Italian Government had ever asked us to undertake the expedition. On the contrary, it was opposed to the Italian policy, which was to quit the country, as both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary of Italy had since declared. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had now advanced a new reason for the expedition. The right hon. Gentleman talked about civilisation and philanthropy. In the case of countries so far removed from the strong arm of England as countries in the interior of Africa, there was no more dangerous doctrine than the doctrine of a crusade on behalf of civilisation and philanthropy. All the Powers of Europe had decided to undertake such a crusade in Africa, and there was not a man who was acquainted with the state of affairs in that country that would not say that the Powers had done more harm than good; and that it would have been far better, in the interests of civilisation and philanthropy, if Africa had been let alone. [*Cheers.*] There had, in fact, been a most extraordinary reversal of policy on the part of the Government.

Lord Salisbury had made a speech declaring that we would gladly accept a present of Egypt from Russia.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): When?

*SIR C. DILKE: In the House of Lords at the opening of the Session. If the hon. Gentleman has not read the principal speech of his own Leader it is a curious thing. [*Laughter.*]

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: It does not mean what you said.

*SIR C. DILKE said he was only a plain person of plain intelligence, and he was so astonished at the statement of Lord Salisbury that he read three or four different reports of the speech. The noble Lord referred to the offer made by the Emperor Nicholas of the partition of Turkey, in which our share was to be Egypt, and said that if that offer were renewed it would be gladly accepted. That was a complete change of front on the part of the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] In fact, there seemed to be no real, definite policy behind this expedition. Some hon. Members on the other side of the House supported it because it would strengthen our hold on Egypt. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yes, but there were others who advocated it on exactly opposite grounds. The hon. Member for North Lambeth (Mr. Stanley) had declared that it was our interest to quit Egypt; but that we should never be able to do so until we had reconquered the Soudan, put down the Dervishes, and crushed the Khalifa. Every reason that had hitherto been given for the expedition—to give assistance to the Italians, to improve the Egyptian frontier, to add a rich province to Egypt—had all broken down, and it was impossible not to believe that the new reason advanced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the cause of civilisation and philanthropy—was simply put forward in the hope that it would prove a good popular cry. [*Cheers.*] The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had attacked him on two occasions for having suggested that it was impossible to stop short of Dar Fur, and that they would have to go on until they had joined one great sphere of influence with another. That view, however was confirmed by Captain Lugard, who knew Africa thoroughly and who had defended the expedition. Lord Salisbury had given up the idea of the route through Africa, and the idea of leasing a strip of country had fallen through. The country they were going to was a disputed country, a no-man's land. The Government were not only running the risk of enormous and perpetual expansion without any prospect of sufficient gain to the country, but they were also running the risk of international complications. He repeated that there had been an absolute change in the foreign policy of the Government, and especially in that portion which bore upon the retention of Egypt. It had been a sudden change, and it had not been a change which could have been rightly affected by the opinion of foreign Powers, because it involved change as to a matter of fact—which was the military interest of this country in the occupation of Egypt. As late as 1888 Lord Salisbury twice approved this language upon the question—that it was a drain on the military and financial resources of England, and that it was a perpetual drain on the home resources. Yet within nine years, without the smallest attempt at consecutiveness in their foreign policy, the Government turned right round on this question, and seemed rather glad of the excuse they had given for remaining, he feared permanently, in Egypt. [*Cheers.*]

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he was always glad to follow the right hon. Gentleman, because the right hon. Gentleman had a way of ignoring important facts. He thought it had always been the view of hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House that if this movement was begun they should go to Khartoum. But the right hon. Gentleman very carefully passed that over. The right hon. Gentleman on a former occasion had asked if it was not likely that they would be drawn on step by step, that the Egyptian forces would be attacked and the British officers sacrificed, and he said also that there lay in front of the Egyptian army one of the most frightful powers in the whole world. From that utterance they might obtain a verdict as to the character of the right hon. Gentleman as a prophet. Other speeches which had been made had been equally violent, and had proved equally wrong, especially that of the right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire. The conscription of to-day was not a burden on the Egyptian people. The Egyptian army was welcomed by the Egyptians of the present day because it was well paid.

*SIR C. DILKE: That is the case with the Nubian recruits, I admit; I was speaking of the Egyptian fellaheen. But the Nubians are a limited class.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said the service was welcomed by the Nubians, and as there was no great difficulty in getting them as recruits the conscription was not a serious burden on the Egyptian fellaheen. The right hon. Gentleman was thinking of the Egyptian conscription at the time he was in office, when these poor wretches of fellaheens were dragged in chains—[Sir C. DILKE: "So they are now"]—from Cairo and other parts of Egypt down to the Red Sea, and there dispatched unarmed to be butchered by the Dervishes. The right hon. Gentleman apparently knew very little about the state of Egypt now. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] The right hon. Gentleman should be cautious before he made such speeches as that to which they had just listened—[*laughter*]—because he was responsible for the terrible blundering, the muddling, the slaughter, and the cost that took place in regard to Egypt and the Soudan. It was the right hon. Gentleman's policy of alliance with France alone that had caused these results.

*SIR C. DILKE said he had stated in that House, and had repeated the statement again and again, that it so happened that he was absent from the country on business of the Crown at the time, and that he never saw the Joint Note until after it was issued.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said that was the first time the right hon. Gentleman had made that statement in that House. [*Laughter.*]

*SIR C. DILKE: No, no.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he recollected the statements of the right hon. Gentleman much better than he did himself. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman had frequently told them that he was not responsible for a special alliance with France, but the statement with regard to his absence from this country they heard that night for the first time.

*SIR C. DILKE: No, I made it in this House before. [*Laughter.*]

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said that as Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the right hon. Gentleman was the guiding spirit of the foreign policy of the Government of that day. The Foreign Minister of the time was in the other House, and was a very able but easy-going gentleman, who did not take very much control of foreign affairs—[*laughter*]—and the right hon. Gentleman forced his policy upon the Government in every phase, and his policy and that of the then Government was to go behind the backs of the other Powers to present a Joint Note with France to the Khedive on January 6, 1882. It was repudiated by all the other Powers and by the Suzerain, and it led directly to all the troubles which followed. The forced evacuation of the Government of that day cost the lives of over 100,000 people, who were slaughtered under circumstances of the greatest cruelty. They knew what General Gordon's protest was, and how he asked how as a gentleman he could do this thing. The right hon. Gentleman was a prominent Member of that Government, and he held him responsible for what had happened. The right hon. Gentleman had attacked the Government for giving as a ground for their movement in the Soudan that they wished to help Italy, a member of the Triple Alliance, and said distinctly that he objected to that policy. [Sir C. DILKE: "I made no attack on the Triple Alliance."] The right hon. Gentleman practically implied that he would revert to a similar policy as had been adopted in the past. [Sir C. DILKE: "No."] Then the right hon. Gentleman had no policy except that of scuttle. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had used language which, he was sure, was approved by everyone on the Government side of the House, because he distinctly stated that this country would not be bullied out of its policy and its position. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: "Hear, hear!"] Oh, of course. [*Laughter.*] They perfectly understood the right hon. Gentleman's cheer. They knew that he would be bullied out of anything by a foreign Power. [*A laugh.*] They did not expect the approval of the right hon. Gentleman, and it was positively refreshing to have a statement from the Treasury Bench which had met his approval. He sincerely hoped the policy of the Government would be persistent and tenacious, and that nothing would check the forward movement until we had obtained possession of Khartoum. He confessed there was one point upon which he did not quite understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In respect of it he hoped some further explanation would be given, though he would not press for any declaration if, in the opinion of the Government, such a declaration would do harm. Lord Salisbury had clearly said it was the intention of the Government to go to Khartoum. There seemed to be some drawing back in the matter on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He trusted he was mistaken. He was persuaded that if any Member of the Government was able to assure the House there was no intention to stop short of Khartoum, the declaration would be received with unanimous favour on the Ministerial side of the House. In all the language the right hon. Gentleman used with regard to the necessity of a firm and consistent dealing with the aggression and opposition of other countries he had the entire support of hon. Members on his own side. If similar language were used with regard to other items of policy the Government would occupy a stronger position in the country than they had recently occupied, and certain very deplorable events would not have happened.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I had not intended to take any part in this discussion, for I was entirely satisfied with what has been said by my right hon. Friend the Member for Montrose and my right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean, in whose opinions I entirely concur, but this Debate has taken an aspect of a far larger and more formidable character than anything connected with an expedition even to Khartoum. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the liberty I had taken in complimenting him upon his prudence and common sense, but I am sorry to say that he has to-night preferred to earn the applause of the hon. Member for Sheffield. [*A laugh.*] We know what the policy of the hon. Member for Sheffield is; he has stated it pretty plainly to-night; he has said that what we have to do is to hold language towards France and Russia such as I regret to say has been used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now, I rise for the purpose of protesting against that language; I say it is mischievous language, it is dangerous language. As I said in the Debate on the Address, these are questions which involve not £500,000 but millions if you choose to embark in a spirit of defiance and hostility upon this Egyptian question with the great military Powers of Europe. It is because the language the Chancellor of the Exchequer used to-night on behalf of the British Government, and which has been applauded by the Member for Sheffield, who has put upon it that interpretation which will be put upon it to-morrow by Europe—[Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: "Hear, hear!"]—that the vote I shall give to-night will not be mainly concerned with the question of an expedition either to Dongola or Khartoum. I shall register my vote against this Motion because I desire to make a public protest against the language of menace and defiance which has been employed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I had hoped and believed it was the intention and the labour of Lord Salisbury and of Her Majesty's Government that those Powers—particularly Russia and France—with whom we have formerly had differences, should be brought into harmony with the British Government for purposes of the greatest importance, and, therefore, I desire to protest in the most emphatic manner against the language that has been used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-night.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I must entirely disclaim having used any language of menace or defiance. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Let us see what the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said. The question as to the appropriation of this money arose before the Caisse. The right hon. Gentleman admits the financial arrangements in Egypt are arrangements in which the Great Powers of Europe have a recognised voice. The question arose whether or not in the Caisse the voice of the majority was to prevail or whether the minority had a veto upon it. That was referred to the tribunal, which it is not disputed is the legal tribunal, to determine that question. They determined, not in our favour, but in favour of the protest of Russia and France. That was a legal decision. The language which the right hon. Gentleman has used to-night is a protest against that legal decision. What did he say? He said that legal decision is one that will induce Her Majesty's Government at an early period to do what they can to raise the whole question of Egyptian administration before Europe and the reversal—["Oh!"]—I am extremely alert not to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman. He will have an opportunity of replying, and I trust he will take the opportunity of removing that impression, which, I confess, unless it is removed, I regard as one of the greatest dangers to which it is possible to expose this country at this moment.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Really, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me on this point, very likely through my own fault. I alluded to the necessary revision, in the year 1898, of the powers of the Mixed Tribunals, owing to the expiry of the term —I believe it is a five years term—for whch certain powers and duties are given to these tribunals—and I said upon that revision this matter must be reconsidered.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: In a sense that should be a reversal, that should be in derogation of the rights of the Great Powers.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: No, not at all. I protest against that. In order to defend the authority of the superior and international tribunal in the Commission of the Caisse.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is to do away with or reverse what has been done, and legally done, on the appeal of Russia and France in this matter. What can be the consequence of this at this moment, when you ought to have desired more than anything else to have left this question alone? When you should not have allowed these sleeping dogs to lie, but up rises the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon this Vote and without any reason whatever demands the raising of the Egyptian question in Europe. He told Europe that we are dissatisfied with the arrangements at present existing as between the Great Powers. What is the situation? We have a legally and internationally established trust deed, under which these proceedings have been taken. There has been a legal decision, the legality of which has not been disputed, and now Her Majesty's Government come forward and make the public announcement that, like a defeated litigant, they are determined to overthrow the final court, and they demand in the face of Europe that the existing arrangements in Egypt shall be overthrown. What for? To prevent Russia and France doing again what legally they have done on the present occasion. Do you think that that is going to be upheld? How is it possible to suppose anything of the kind? After all, this action against which the eloquent denunciation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was directed belongs to the present international law governing the relations of the Powers in Egypt. The hon. Member for Sheffield applauds the Government for having, as he says, told Russia and France that we will not be bullied. That is a very natural interpretation of the unwise language which has been used. [*Cheers.*] It is still more unwise to point to the fact that immediately upon this decision being contrary to our wishes we demand at once a reversal of that decision.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Reconsideration is necessary.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The reconsideration that the right hon. Gentleman holds out is one to deprive the Powers of the rights that they at present hold. Surely the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot be of opinion that I have ever been a captious critic of his sentiments and opinions, but I cannot fail to day to express my great regret at the use of language which I hope will not bear the interpretation that it conveys to my mind. I trust we shall have a very different statement from the Government which may avert consequences that I cannot help thinking would be of the gravest character. ["Hear, hear!"] Certainly, unless that is so I must record my vote against this proposal, not principally in reference to the character of the proposal itself, but as a protest against the spirit in which it has been introduced and the consequences which I believe might follow. ["Hear, hear!"]

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. GEORGE CURZON, Lancashire, Southport): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has already, on his own behalf, repudiated what I believe the majority of the House will consider to be the most unwarrantable interpretation that the right hon. Gentleman has put upon his words. Those hon. Members now in the House who had the advantage of listening to the clear and emphatic statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot have found in that speech one word which can legitimately be said to have been provocative of irritation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer repeated what is a historical fact, that our responsibilities and position in Egypt arose from the fact that after the rebellion of Arabi Pasha in 1882 France, who had previously shared the condominium with ourselves, declined any longer to take part with us. Rightly or wrongly, she deliberately desisted. We were thereby left alone. [" Hear, hear ! "] Since that time, it is true that we have not, either at Cairo or Paris, received from the French Government the support which we should have been glad to receive, and which might have facilitated our task. [" Hear, hear ! "] It is true also, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that if we had had a free hand we might have proceeeded even further than we have done in fitting the Egyptian people for self-government. To rest upon that the interpretation of something imprudent, something provocative to France, is to place on the statement an interpretation which neither the words nor the sentiment behind them for a moment justified. [*Cheers.*] But the leader of the Opposition says that the particular phrase which excited his ire, and which to-morrow will raise the consternation of Europe, was the intimation by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that when the time for the revision of the Mixed Tribunals comes in the natural course of events, we shall take into consideration the manner in which the recent decision was arrived at. As we are on the subject of the Mixed Tribunals, let me add one word which may possibly be of information to some hon. Members. The right hon. Member for Montrose reproached us for having embarked on this Egyptian policy last year without making sure that we had the consent of the Powers. Well, Sir, when we had embarked on this policy we very soon ascertained that we did have the assent of the majority of the Powers. [*Cheers.*] Nothing could more clearly prove that than the fact that the Caisse of the debt advanced the £500,000 ; a decision which was given by four to two of the Commissioners of the Caisse—England, Germany, Austria and Italy being on the one side, and France and Russia on the other. Now comes the important point. What we have been dealing with to-night is not the decision of the Caisse, but of the Mixed Tribunals. On the tribunal which decided against the majority of the Caisse neither England nor Austria was represented at all. [" Hear, hear ! "] It has appeared in the Blue Book on Lord Cromer's authority, and it has been currently reported, that the decision of the tribunal to which so much legal authority has been attached, was one in which the two parties were equally divided. There were eight members of the Court—five Europeans and three natives—and as the vote was four to four, by a course that is not enshrined in law, but has grown up in practice, the decision was given to the side having the majority of Europeans. It has been assumed throughout this Debate, and cannot be denied, that the decision, in its consequences, if not its motives, was affected by the political predilections of the Powers. [*Opposition cheers.*] If, then, it can be shown that among the Powers that voted on the tribunal two Powers who took part in the original decision were not represented at all, and if it is admitted that the decision was mainly political and not judicial, can there be anything very astonishing in the Chancellor of the Exchequer saying that when a year hence the time comes for revision we shall have to take into account the constitution of the tribunals and the manner in which the decision was arrived at? [*Cheers.*] Passing on to other points, I may say that I cannot help noticing a very marked contrast between the tone and phraseology of this Debate and that of our similar proceedings a year ago. Then the House was crowded on both sides, and loud were the cheers as adjective after adjective from the repertoire of right hon. Gentlemen opposite was hurled at our devoted heads. [" Hear, hear ! "] This evening, at any rate, the Benches opposite cannot be said to be crowded—[" hear, hear ! "]—and, with the exception of the remarks the right hon. Gentleman has directed against the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the invective used has been of a very chastened order. [" Hear, hear ! "] The right hon. Member for Montrose still adheres to his conviction that we are mad. [*Laughter.*] A more sensible form of lunacy than a campaign conducted to this brilliant issue I can scarcely imagine. [*Cheers and laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman thinks we are mad because, in the present condition of the world, we have undertaken this expedition in the Soudan. Was the moment any less inopportune when last autumn right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite were continually urging us to undertake a single-handed expediton in another part of the world? [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman has asked whether these advances to the Egyptian Government are ever going to be repaid; and he said we shall not be able to obtain repayment without starving the Egyptian Government. [" Hear, hear ! "] There seems to prevail an idea among some hon. Members that the Exchequer of the Egyptian Government is in an improverished and depleted condition. What are the facts? What are the financial resources at the disposal of the Egyptian Government? They have, in the first place, a Reserve Fund —through the successful conversion of some parts of the debt in 1890, and from the interest on the money thus accumulated, of £2,305,000. They have further, a General Reserve Fund, constituted by the decree of 1888, which, at the present moment, after deducting liabilities, shows a surplus of £2,235,000; and, finally, there is a Special Reserve Fund in which there is at the present moment a sum of £255,000. This is the impoverished Government which we are alleged to be starving and to which we are making an advance that cannot be paid. I admit that these funds are not at its sole disposal—[*Opposition cheers*]—but it has behind it resources amounting to £4,795,000. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman alluded to what no doubt is a very unfortunate fact in the situation —namely, that Egypt financially, and as a consequence politically, is, to adopt the phrase of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, held in leading-strings by the Powers of Europe. [" Hear, hear ! "] But it cannot be contemplated that those powers possessed by other nations—at any rate, it is not likely—will be permanently used by them to the detriment of Egyptian success and advancement, and it is scarcely likely that, when measures are being taken by us to recover to Egypt her old provinces and to secure for her that commerce of which she has been deprived, and to make a still further advance in her prosperity, merely political considerations or the prejudices of the Powers should permanently tie up this great sum which she has saved by her own economies and which she must one day be permitted to use to her own advantage. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose went on to say, "Why do you not pay this sum yourself?" I do not know whether that is a serious question. I noticed it did not excite a single cheer on his own side of the House, and I do not think it would have been received with enthusiasm upon either side. So long as the Egyptian Government are willing and anxious to pay I do not think we need needlessly disturb susceptibilities here by discussing whether or not we should pay. I come to another point in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in which I must correct a very grave misapprehension into which he and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean fell. That was with reference to Kassala. I must say I admire the courage of the right hon. Gentleman in mentioning Kassala at all, because last year, when we said that one of the purposes of this expedition was to bring relief to the Italians in their beleaguered position, he said—

> "What a preposterous assumption it is that you can give any relief to the Italians at Kassala by making a military movement 500 miles away!"

It had precisely the effect we anticipated and which we desired. [*Cheers.*] There is not a shadow of doubt that our advance up the Nile did detach from Kassala the Dervish forces who were at that time threatening Kassala. It cannot be doubted that the fact that the Italian troops are still in the occupation of Kassala is due to the advance we made up the Nile. We had received communications from the Italian Government in which they urgently requested us to make some forward movement in order to assist them.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Will that correspondence be laid on the Table of the House?

*MR. CURZON: That I cannot say.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: This is a very important point. The Under Secretary is making a statement in reference to communications from a foreign Government asking our intervention and in respect of which military assistance was given. I venture to suggest to him that, having made that statement to the House in contradiction of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, he is bound to lay that correspondence on the Table of the House. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR C. DILKE: May I also be allowed to explain that that statement is in contradiction of personal knowledge which leaves no doubt on my own mind as regards the Marquis di Rudini and of the statement made by the Duke of Sermoneta at the time of his resignation?

*MR. CURZON: I am not aware whether the principle laid down by the Leader of the Opposition is a correct one. My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House tells me that the principle applies where a quotation is made. I have made no quotation. [*Cheers and Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] I have stated the fact, not for the first time in this House, and I have stated it on my responsibility as a Minister of the Crown, and I therefore cannot accept the contradiction of the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose says that we have dropped our old arguments and have adopted a set of new arguments. We have done nothing of the kind. The arguments which we employed to justify the advance last year are the arguments which, in so far as they have not been rendered obsolete by our success, we continue to use to-day. [*Cheers.*] Last year this expedition was justified by the Government on the ground that it would protect the frontiers of Egypt from a danger by which we believed that they were threatened. That danger has, we are glad to say, turned out to be much less than we anticipated, and therefore that need for the advance has disappeared. The second cause was the desire to render assistance to the Italians. That we have succeeded in doing, and therefore that cause has also receded into the background. The third cause was that we hoped to recover for Egypt a part of her lost provinces in the Soudan. That we are engaged in doing, and that course we hope to continue to a successful end. [*Cheers.*] But we are now told this evening, for the first time, that new arguments have been used, and that the argument that we should atone for our mistakes and follies in the past and that we should endeavour to rescue the poor people of Khartoum from the tyranny of the Khalifa involves an entire change in the situation. Those are the considerations which were present to our minds last year, just as they are present this year. ["Hear, hear!"] The arguments upon which the advance was justified stand exactly where they were. What has occurred since last year only goes to prove that we were right, and to add force and intensity to them. ["Hear, hear!"] There only remains one more point with which I need deal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean laid the very greatest stress upon an allegation that the speech which has been made this evening by the Chancellor of the Exchequer indicated a total reversal of the policy of the Government. None of us on this Bench were conscious of such a reversal having been accomplished. ["Hear, hear!"] I listened with interest to hear the right hon. Gentleman's evidence, and it amounted to this—that Lord Salisbury, in another place, had made a speech in which he raised a purely fanciful and hypothetical condition, and said that if an offer, made many years ago, were repeated now it was one that might be accepted. Are we really, on the basis of this hypothesis, to accept the view that the whole of the Cabinet have entirely reversed their policy of last year? But there was another reason, another proof, given by the right hon. Gentleman, and that was that I—poor I—[*laughter*]—had brought the Government to this change. I am bound to confess that my influence has never been estimated by myself, and I believe not by anybody else—[*laughter*]—at that value. It is, indeed, a new character which is put upon me to-night—which I must modestly repudiate—of being the person to lead the Government, so to speak, by the nose to adopt a policy which they had previously repudiated and with which they would otherwise be in disagreement. It is not the case. There is no change in the policy of the Government. [" Hear, hear ! "] The policy of the Government as regards Egypt and as regards the Soudan remains exactly where it was last year, exactly where it has been at every point since the rebellion of Arabi in 1882 and since the rebellion of the Mahdi in 1884 and 1885.

Mr. MORLEY: Do you mean to say that Lord Salisbury's declaration of 1888, which I have just read, is the policy of to-day?

***Mr. CURZON**: The right hon. Gentleman quotes what was said in 1888, but he does not pretend that the conditions are not entirely changed. [" Hear, hear ! "] Undoubtedly Lord Salisbury said in 1888, as everybody said, I believe, on both sides of the House, that the Soudan could not be reconquered, and that it would be inadvisable, if not impossible, to do so. But those circumstances have changed, because, not merely has the Egyptian Government made strides in the recovery of her financial credit and in the improvement of her resources which no one could have anticipated, but the powers which at that time were dominant at Khartoum—the powers of the Mahdi—are a very different thing from the powers of the Khalifa at the present time. [" Hear, hear ! "] What was impossible in 1880 turns out to be feasible now. But that does not indicate a change of policy. The policy of the Government has always remained the same. As I understand it, the policy of the Government in Egypt is, by persevering stages, to fit the Egyptian nation for the task of self-government—[*Irish laughter and Ministerial cheers*]—and to enable them in future to be ruled by an independent Government based on the affections and attachment of their own people. [" Hear, hear ! "] In pursuit of that object, the British Government have already conquered great difficulties. They have enormously improved the financial and judicial administration of Egypt; they have given peace and prosperity to her people, and they are now engaged in the task of endeavouring to recover for them the frontiers which, owing to our mistaken policy in the past, were lost to them. [*Cheers.*] That is the continuity of policy which has been observed and to which the Government will adhere—[*cheers*]—and I cannot believe that this House would ever give its support to any Government which was so faint-hearted and so selfish as to abandon that work. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said he desired to address a few words to the House, and he would endeavour to do so in measured and careful language, because he conceived that some of the heat developed in the Debate had arisen from misconception of the words which had been employed, and that that heat and misconception might easily pass from the area of that Assembly and excite persons elsewhere, and lead to consequences which we should all most sincerely regret. [" Hear, hear ! "] He understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that, when the question of the reconstitution of the Mixed Tribunals came up 12 months hence, it might, in view of the character of the judgment just given, be necessary to consider the composition of those tribunals and their competency to undertake such a question as was submitted to them. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: " Hear, hear ! "] That in itself ought not to excite resentment elsewhere; it was necessary; it was inevitable. It was provided that from time to time these tribunals should come under international review and the scope of their jurisdiction would have to be considered, but he thought the connection of this question with the judgment recently delivered might excite, and justly excite, some feeling unless there was further explanation.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The words used were " We will not be worried." [" Hear, hear ! "]

Mr. COURTNEY hoped they would be allowed to get out of that atmosphere. [" Hear, hear ! "] He thought his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others who had spoken had a little misconceived the ground of the judgment and the situation in reference to which that judgment had been delivered. His right hon. Friend said Egypt was in leading strings, Egypt was under bonds and could not do as she liked with her own, and he used other phrases of a similar character. But how was it that Egypt was under leading strings? Egypt was bankrupt, and the position would be best understood if he likened the law of liquidation to a deed of assignment for the benefit of the creditors of Egypt. Under that law Egypt was to be carried on as a going concern, its wants to be provided for, and its surplus revenue was to supply a fund to meet contingencies and provide for redemption of debt. But the contingencies that might arise were to be those that arose from the carrying on of Egypt as a going concern. For example, there might be a low Nile, and then recourse might be had to the reserve to make good the loss; or if there arose any internal difficulty bringing about an increase of expenditure or a decline of revenue, then the temporary difficulty might be met by recourse to this fund. It was only for contingencies that arose in Egyptian territory that the reserve was to be employed. He had, speaking elsewhere, used an illustration to make the position clear, and this he repeated. Suppose a going concern in the shape of a colliery and trustees invested with the management of that colliery, these trustees being under conditions of appointment required to provide for the expenses of working the colliery, and lay aside profits to provide a fund to meet contingencies and for the redemption of debt. If an accident occurred in the working of that colliery that was obviously a contingency arising out of the working of that colliery, and the expenses would be met out of the reserve. But suppose the trustees, wisely or unwisely, resolved upon working a pit a mile off which had been abandoned years before, would that be within the functions of the trustees and the range of their duties under the deed of arrangement? ["Hear, hear!"] Surely to set about the working of the distant pit would be *ultra vires* on the part of the trustees, and they would naturally go back to those from whom they derived authority before taking action outside their trust. ["Hear!"] The judgment of the Court proceeded on the ground that the Caisse had not competency to undertake to support a transaction which lay outside the original going concern. If new enterprises were undertaken they must go back to those who created the deed of arrangement. This was the view taken by the Court. He had an opportunity of talking about this to one of the most distinguished international lawyers in the country, who was entirely in favour of the advance to Dongola, and he held the judgment of the Court to be entirely right. There was another name he might mention, not that of a lawyer, but of a gentleman thoroughly conversant with the history of these transactions, and it was a name that would command respect in the House, and again the opinion was that the judgment of the Court was just. It was useless to quarrel with the Court, and we could not alter the law. To do that we must go back to the Powers that created the law. He wished to dispel the idea that Egypt belonged to the Egyptians; that was not so now; it belonged to the creditors, and it was not for us to shake off the fetters the creditors of Egypt had put upon the country. ["Hear!"] The money had to be repaid, and then arose a question which had to be considered in the light of the limitations laid down by the Court. Egypt under the new law of liquidation could not borrow, and yet we were going to advance money to Egypt which Egypt was going somehow to repay. How could that be? It appeared to him like the experiences we had had in the history of the development of railways. When a railway company some years ago exhausted its borrowing powers, or could not raise money under them, it still got into debt and gave certificates of indebtedness under the system known by the phrase now passed out of use—Lloyd's Bonds. If, in accordance with the law of liquidation, satisfaction of this debt could not come out of the surplus any more than the original sum, then the satisfaction of the debt interest and instalments must come out of curtailments of ordinary expenditure.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER reminded his right hon. Friend that Egypt had power to borrow to a certain extent.

MR. COURTNEY said this was for contingencies in respect to which she could fall back on the fund, contingencies that happened in ordinary administration. We were to be repaid under some sort of Lloyd's Bond. He would not vote against this payment; we must make it, whether it be repaid or not. In respect to the £270,000 for the railway, he asked when was that railway going to be made? Not before March 31? ["Hear!"] Surely, then, this should come into the next financial year.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER explained it was for purchase of material.

MR. COURTNEY said then would come the cost of making the railway. The situation was not encouraging. One hon. Member found encouragement in the language of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and deduced from this language that there was a change of policy.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he did not refer to a change in the Egyptian policy or the policy in regard to Egypt; he was referring to the change of tone and manner in dealing with it by the Treasury.

MR. COURTNEY said the hon. Member appeared to think the tone and manner of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, contrasted with that of last year, would affect the judgment of the country. The judgment of the country was fickle, some people said; but he thought the judgment of the country appreciated sobriety of judgment and would not support a policy where this was lacking. In the spirit of that old-fashioned sobriety of judgment he held the opinion as to this expenditure which he had expressed last year, that it was impolitic, inexpedient, and dangerous. He did not wish to keep the Soudan in a state of oppression and discomfort any more than any other part of the world. But was this country able to do what the Under Secretary talked of? Were they able to conquer the Soudan and hand it over to Egypt, and, having trained Egypt in self-government, could they leave her with anything like equanimity to administer the Soudan so conquered? ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that Lord Salisbury in 1888 measured the forces better than he did to-day. He was not able to entirely persuade himself that Lord Salisbury changed his views, in spite of the language which his right hon. Friend said he used on the first night of the Session. He had some reason to believe that Lord Salisbury was no more fond of this forward policy than he was himself. ["Hear, hear!"] If his Lordship had his own way, he believed he would maintain the moderate and sober position which he occupied nine years ago. The change of circumstances which had ensued did not warrant any

change in the attitude to be adopted. The policy of moderation and abstinence from enterprise of a wild and visionary character was, above all, the policy to be maintained in relation to the other Powers of Europe; and was most important to their position, not only in Europe, but throughout the whole world. He hoped the course of the Debate would not tend to worsen the position of this country in relation to other Powers. He should be deeply sorry if any words of his tended to excite worse feelings than existed. His sole purpose in rising was to endeavour, if possible, to state a view of the case which might lead some fellow Members on his side of the House to understand how things were looked at differently by other people than they were here, and to inquire whether there was not some reason for the attitude they assumed when they in this country were sometimes disposed to think they were too suspicious, too angry, and too intolerant in their judgment of the British people. [*Cheers.*]

MR. LABOUCHERE hoped Her Majesty's Ministers would take heed of the wise and sober words which had fallen from one of their most distinguished supporters. ["Hear, hear!"] That debate, it seemed to him, would not be useless if the Committee could get some clearer explanations than they had at present from the Government. The whole history of the relations of the Government towards this expedition in the Soudan had been a position of evasion. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had said he spoke as a Minister of the Crown. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would be an excellent Minister of the Crown; but as a matter of hard fact he was not a Minister of the Crown—[*laughter*]—but was in that House as Lord Salisbury's secretary—[*renewed laughter*]—and, he assumed, did his best to express in his own words the views of Lord Salisbury. The Under Secretary fell foul of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean because he complained of what had transpired last year with respect to the Italian demand to this country to aid them in retaining Kassala. The Under Secretary told the House last year that such a demand had been made.

*MR. CURZON: Request.

MR. LABOUCHERE said that the Italian Ministers themselves confronted the right hon. Gentleman with a denial that any such demand or request was made, and he, therefore, desired to know under what circumstances this very hole-in-the-corner demand, which was put forward now as a plea for this country engaging in vast expense in order to subdue the Soudan, was made. ["Hear, hear!"] Would the right hon. Gentleman give them the Papers? Was there any communication made by the Italian Ambassador to Lord Salisbury? Was there any communication made by the Italian Ministry to the Ambassador of this country in Italy? Was it a private or personal demand on the part of those who reigned but did not govern? Was it a demand made through another Emperor? Was it a demand made through the German Emperor? [*Ministerial cries of* "No!"] He wanted this matter to be cleared up. The right hon. Gentleman had been referring to documents. [MR. CURZON: "No!"] At any rate, he did refer to some species of document, but he would not tell them if the communication was verbal or in writing, and the Government seemed to be absolutely ashamed of what they had done. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] Then let them produce their documents. It was a fair and reasonable demand to ask the Government to lay before the House of Commons, which was responsible for the action of the Government, the statement which they said was made, either in writing or verbally, to induce them to engage in an expedition for which they were now asking a million sterling and would have to ask for more. Such a positon had never before been taken up by any Government. He was sorry to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer speak as he had done. He had always believed the right hon. Gentleman was a wise, sober, and cautious man, but he seemed to speak that night with the reckless zeal of a convert. Who had got him over? Was it the Leader of the House or Lord Salisbury, or the Minister of the Crown—[*laughter*]—who sat next him? To put it vulgarly, this guardian of the purse appeared to have been "got at." The Chancellor of the Exchequer had thrown down the gauntlet to Egypt. He told them he wanted to change the Egyptian tribunals. In 1898 there would be an opportunity of reconsidering the whole matter as to what tribunals were to decide in questions relating to Egypt. Why did the right hon. Gentleman want to change them? Because they went against this country. Simply and solely because the Courts in Egypt decided against them they were going to ask Europe to alter the nature and character of those Courts. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that we were in Egypt and had a right to decide everything.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I did not say that. I said we were in Egypt, but I never said we had a right to decide everything.

MR. LABOUCHERE remarked that he took down what the right hon. Gentleman said at the time, but he could not now make out his own writing. [*Laughter.*] At any rate the right hon. Gentleman said they were in such a position in Egypt that they were bound to look after the safety of that country, and they had a right to do so. He believed the right hon. Gentleman went as far as that.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That is a very different thing.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked had it not reached the right hon. Gentleman that several Powers in Europe considered this country had no right to be in Egypt, that they remained there against their pledges, and were dishonouring themselves by doing so? "Temporary" as far as our occupation of Egypt was concerned, meant 15, 20, or 30 years, and there was not the remotest intention at present of leaving the country. It had been said we were there by the wishes of Egypt. But its Ministers and Assembly protested whenever they had a chance against our being there. The Ministers were told they must understand that their places depended on being our subordinate instruments and slaves, and to talk of the country having any voice in the matter under such circumstances was ridiculous. Then it was said we were occupying Egypt to teach the people self-government. Let the people of Egypt learn self-government by governing themselves. We have not yielded to the Egyptians a vestige of self-government. We had distributed well paid employés all over the country, and we governed by those employés who could not say their souls were their own. He joined with the right hon. Member for Bodmin in hoping that the Egyptian Government would not be recouped. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said they had the right to borrow up to £1,000,000 sterling. They had the right to temporarily borrow that sum for current expenses and issue Treasury bills. But this Vote was not in the nature of Treasury bills but a permanent loan, only to be paid off when they had the money. It was most desirable that the Egyptian Government should understand that it could not wage wars and bully the money out of others. [*Cheers.*] Dr. Johnson said that patriotism was "the last refuge of scoundrels." [*Laughter.*] The last refuge of a Minister when he had no better reason to give for his policy was a general plea of philanthropy. [*Renewed laughter.*] When the Chancellor of the Exchequer got down to that he had got down to the lowest abyss. Were we to go careering about the world to look for a country which was in difficulties, and when we had found one to undertake an expedition to make that country our own? If that was the right hon. Gentleman's philanthropy it should, like charity, begin at home. If Armenia had been as easy to get at as the Soudan we should have made an expedition there. The Chancellor of the Exchequer sneered at the Armenians. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] He said, "Are black men nothing?" He himself believed the Soudanese were brown rather than black—[*laughter*]—but what did it matter whether a man was a Mahomedan, Buddhist, or Christian? He would prefer to spend money in defending the Armenians than the Soudanese. He understood the Soudanese were ready to be killed rather than submit to foreign rule. It was said we remained in Egypt because the Egyptians were not capable of governing themselves. Yet we were going to impose on the Egyptians the obligation of governing the Soudan. There were two reasons why the expedition to Dongola was undertaken. The first was that we might keep well with France and Germany, and the next that we might back up the Triple Alliance. But a stronger reason still was that we ourselves might extend our territory on the southern frontier of Egypt and increase the area of our dominion in that part of the world. It was perfectly absurd to tell the House that we were likely to get out of Egypt quicker because we had undertaken this Soudan expedition. He intended to do his utmost by his vote—a miserable way of doing it when in such a minority—to show that Radicals would have no part in this policy of continuous occupation of Egypt, and still less in this expedition which was undertaken by a vague jingo feeling to be developed and kept up every year to first take one country and then another. The right hon. Member for Bodmin said he did not think Lord Salisbury had changed his mind. But there was no question but that Lord Salisbury had changed his policy. A few years ago Lord Salisbury declared that it was impossible to conquer the Soudan. The answer was now, "We are showing you we can conquer it." That was a gambler's answer. It was no argument that we should conquer the Soudan because we could do so. But we had not conquered the Soudan. He believed Lord Salisbury was a more sensible man than the majority of his Party. [*Ministerial laughter.*] Lord Salisbury had made a concession, but he had always noticed that concessions Lord Salisbury made to hon. Gentlemen were in words rather than deeds. There were only two strong Little Englanders in this country—Lord Salisbury and himself. [*Much laughter.*] Lord Salisbury in the exigencies of his position as Leader of the Conservative Party had changed his policy but had not changed his own opinions. The right hon. Member for Montrose said that the Government must have been mad in undertaking this expedition to Dongola. Hon. Members might have heard of a monarch called King Cambyses, who, having acquired and squatted Egypt, tried to conquer the Soudan. The consequence was that when he got there his friends came to the conclusion that he was mad, and he disappeared. [*Laughter.*] The Government had only to go on asking for money for these expeditions, and they would cease to live as Ministers of the Crown. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) thought we should pause before we went any further in the Soudan. We had pledged ourselves over and over again as to what our policy in Egypt should be. He had refreshed his memory as to the terms of those pledges, and they were such as, if made between honourable men in private life, would constitute a strong obligation. He would like to put this question to a simple test. He would like to take his own, or any other constituency, and try to ascertain if 90 out of any 100 persons could put down on paper what were in their opinion the advantages to be gained, not by Egypt but by the people of Great Britain and Ireland, by the policy of the Government. Though it was possible that the other 10 might be able to formulate reasons which would satisfy themselves, he undertook to say that every one of them would differ. No doubt the English officers in Egypt had been doing magnificent work; but wherever a British officer was put down to do a piece of work he did it well, and made the country in which he worked better than he found it. The work they had done in Egypt might be a very good thing for Egypt, but was it an equally good thing for the people of this country; for, after all, he had an infinitely greater regard for the people of this country than he had for the people of Egypt. It was suggested that the waterway of the Nile and that the commerce of Egypt were of great importance to this country, but he did not see that we need lose the commerce of Egypt if some international arrangement was arrived at, and even if we had ten times the amount of commerce which Egypt offered to us, it would not compensate for ten minutes of the international conflict that might be forced upon us by our remaining in the country without some such arrangement. It could not be contended that Egypt was of any military advantage to this country. There was a consensus of opinion on that point. That was the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief and of the Prime Minister, and it was only common sense to say that it could not be a source of strength to this country to have 3,000 men in Egypt, with a base 4,000 miles from the centre of the power of this country, and separated from it by powerful and it might be hostile Powers. Moreover, it was also the universal opinion that the very idea of using the Canal as a means of communication in time of war was preposterous. It was clear, therefore, that, from a military point of view, no advantage accrued to this country. On the other hand, there could be no doubt that the danger which was inherent in the situation was something extraordinary. He had always held very strongly that there were matters on which we came into conflict with French opinion, to combat which it was undoubtedly right that the whole power of this country should be used; but he admired the French nation and had no desire to run the risk of a quarrel with them on this matter. It might be shown that we had a good argument here and there, but the main fact remained that we were pursuing this policy in direct hostility to France and Russia, whether they were right or wrong. No one had a greater belief than he had in the power of this country. He believed that still, even in the changed state of the world, the British Empire was the strongest Power existing, on one condition and one condition only, that the whole force and power of the Empire was exerted with the consent and enthusiastic support of the Anglo-Saxon population, and he did not think it possible to secure the support of the country in a campaign arising in Egypt on this question with that unanimity which could alone justify the Government in undertaking it. There might be reasons for this policy which had not been confided to the House and which might throw a totally different light on the question, but if that was so, he did not see why the House should not be told of them. There was an old fable of the giant who recuperated his strength every time he touched Mother Earth. He would reverse that fable and say that every yard we went from the only element which was the source of our strength, we endangered our position in the world. He had no wish to appear as an alarmist about dangers from abroad, but he would point out that in India we were governing a great country that was a great strain on our powers. We kept up there 70,000 British troops and a native force of 200,000, and we did not find that excessive for the purpose. Were we now to take in hand a second India, were we to undertake the administration of another great country without taking any of those precautions which experience had taught us ought to be taken? He could not see any compensation held out at the present moment for the efforts we might be compelled to make, and he would feel much happier in his mind if he thought that Her Majesty's Government realised that there were only two alternatives in this matter. One was that by the diplomacy of their great chief, some arrangement might be made by which this bone of contention between the Powers of Europe might be removed, and by which this country might administer Egypt with the full consent of the Powers of Europe. The other alternative was to continue their policy in defiance of the other Powers of Europe. If the Government were going to adopt the latter course let them, at all events, take ordinary, reasonable precautions, such as reasonable men of business would take when undertaking a great risk. Let them double the army and double the navy, strengthen the Mediterranean garrisons, and make all the preparations necessary for a contingency which every man in the House knew was not inconceivable and not altogether improbable; for, he contended, when the Government were deliberately adopting a policy which brought them into constant and irritating conflict with two great Powers, they did run risks which it was absolutely futile to ignore.

*Mr. H. M. STANLEY (Lambeth, N.) said that if his hon. Friend below him was not an alarmist of an extreme character, he did not know how he would define the word. [" Hear, hear! "] He thought the hon. Gentleman was even more so than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. "What are you doing in Egypt?" they asked one after another. "We do not understand your policy. You are offending France and you are offending Russia, and you are preparing for a great war." That was the meaning of the speeches he had heard so far. He entertained the very opposite view, and he could see nothing at all alarming in the situation in Egypt or in any purview of the world he could take round about it—[" hear, hear! "]—and, if we kept our temper, he did not see why we should not emerge successfully from the dismal possibilities that were suggested. The British troops were merely acting as policemen in Lower Egypt. They were Egyptian troops, under the leadership of British officers, who were marching up the Nile. There was nothing at all alarming in the position of affairs. Two P. and O. steamers could, if necessary, bring away the entire British force; and all the fleets of France and Russia could not prevent them. In going to Abu Hamed and building a railway from there to Wady Halfa the Government were taking a more important step than even the march upon Dongola. At Abu Hamed they would command the entire White Nile. It was a splendid strategical position, and, possessing it, they might be said to cut the Soudan in two. The right hon. Member for Montrose took an extremely dismal view of the case. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman what were the Government doing in Egypt more than Russia was doing in Siberia, or France between the Senegal and the Niger? They were building railways to exploit their territories. Egypt was doing exactly the same thing, and the British Government merely stood by approving and advising. The same tone of exaggeration was heard now that had marked the discussion last year, when it was said that we were locking up our forces in the Soudan. The right hon. Member for Montrose said these were delicate and dangerous transactions. What was delicate and dangerous? Staying in Egypt until we thought it absolutely necessary that we should leave? The only imprudent language used had been that of the right hon. Gentleman himself. As he listened to the right hon. Gentleman he got a beautiful insight into the causes of the instability and vacillation of the Gladstonian Government of 1880. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to him to be saying:—

> "It was I who caused all that vacillation; it was I who caused that railway to be laid down and then taken up again; it was I who sent the expedition too late to Khartoum; it was I who caused General Gordon to be lost; it was I who sacrificed the interests of the Soudan."

Mr. J. MORLEY: May I remind the hon. Member that I was not a Member of the Government of that day?

*Mr. STANLEY said the right hon. Gentleman had stated that he had been for the last 12 or 14 years a most energetic opponent of these Soudan expeditions.

Mr. J. MORLEY: Yes, from the quarter where the hon. Member is now speaking. [" Hear, hear! "]

*Mr. STANLEY: As an adviser of the Government.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I moved an Amendment against Mr. Gladstone's Government on this very subject.

*Mr. STANLEY repeated that he read in the right hon. Gentleman's remarks the reason for the vacillation of the Gladstonian Government. That Government showed the same singular timidity which was manifested by the right hon. Gentleman now. The present Government knew exactly what they were going to do. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] They were not going a mile further than their strength would permit; every advance would depend on financial and political considerations. At present their objective was Abu Hamed, and it was as easy of access as his house was from there. [*Laughter.*] He appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite to take courage; he had studied the question as much as any man in the House, and he believed this expedition to Abu Hamed would result in remarkable consequences, not only to Egypt and the Soudan, but to the whole world.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry) moved to reduce the Vote by £72,500, which was approximately the amount that Ireland would have to contribute.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: As I informed the hon. Member the last time he tried to raise that question, it would be distinctly out of order on a Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. KNOX pointed out that in this case there had been no previous estimate before the Committee.

*The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS: The matter cannot be discussed on this Vote; it is not relevant. Even if the hon. Member succeeded in diminishing the amount it would not relieve Ireland from contributing her share.

Mr. KNOX said he would move the reduction as a matter of protest. This was a question for the taxpayers. The taxpayers of England could look after themselves; but on behalf of the taxpayers of Ireland he objected to this enormous expenditure on a futile expedition. Unless they attacked the expenditure year after year, and voted for economy, however unpopular it might be, they would not release the people from the burden of taxation that was pressing on the country. He did not take the extreme line of contending that Ireland had no interest in any Imperial expenditure outside her own shores. Ireland was as much interested as any other part of the Kingdom, in expansion in regions where white men might labour and flourish. But he denied that the mass of the people either in Ireland or Great Britain were in favour of expansion in the Nile Valley. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had used language about the tribunals of Egypt which would have been out of order if applied to the Courts of this country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that he intended to consider whether the Court that had decided against him could not undergo some change. Many international lawyers were of opinion that the decision of the Court was right; yet the right hon. Gentleman said that when the opportunity arrived he should upset the Court. Against such language he protested, because it might be expensive language for Ireland as well as Great Britain. The threat to establish a different sort of mixed tribunal, or perhaps an exclusively English tribunal, was a threat deliberately directed against France and Russia. They had been told that the first cause of the expedition to Dongola was to relieve the Italians, but as against that there was the statement of the late Minister for Foreign Affairs in Italy, that the Italians did not want our intervention. There was, he knew, a conflict of opinion as to what was really said at an interview at the Foreign Office, but whether the Italians asked for this aid or not, Irishmen had no desire to pay for what had been done or to do anything that would encourage the Italian Government in their disastrous policy in Africa. The real object of British policy had been to checkmate France. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that France and Russia would not "worry" England out of Egypt. Well, he did not suppose that they would be able to worry England into keeping her pledges by anything short of force. Irishmen knew by long experience that force was the only thing that would make the English people keep their plighted word. When the Government said to the French and Russians that they would not be worried out of Egypt, they were telling the French and Russians that if they wanted to get the British out of Egypt they must take more formidable measures than worry, and must use their armies and navies to do it. As the representative of a country which had to pay far more than its full share of Imperial expenditure, and which contributed far more than its fair share of fighting men to the Army that in the case of war would be sent to wage a hopeless contest against Powers that were infinitely stronger than England, he protested against the right hon. Member's note of menace against France and Russia. In Ireland they had no reason to regard France in any other light than in that of an old ally and friend, and for the last 80 years France had been, on the whole, more friendly to England than Germany had. France had shared with England the folly of the Crimean War, and had helped her on many other occasions. He failed to see any ground for the Government taking this attitude against France on the present occasion, unless it were that they were the catspaw of Germany. Of course the German Empire had supported the action of England before the mixed tribunal, but it was not out of love for this country. It was because Germany knew that anything that would embroil France and England would be to her advantage, for a dispute between the two countries would divert the attention of France from her lost provinces and the attention of the people of this country from affairs in South Africa. It was thus to the interest of Germany to aid England in making this new departure in her Egyptian policy. Ministers had said that England would clear out of Egypt as soon as the Egyptian people were fit to govern themselves. It amused Irishmen to hear of this preparation of Egypt for self-government. For 700 years England had been teaching the Irish people how to govern themselves, and apparently they were not yet fit to do so. At any rate, England refused them self-government. If England was not to fulfil her pledges to Europe by leaving Egypt until she had fitted the people for self-government, 700 years, judging from Irish experience, might elapse before that consummation was arrived at. There was not the slightest possibility of Egypt being able to govern herself in the ordinary European sense within any reasonable period of time. If the British Government would consent to some system of European control for Egypt, the reality of their pledges might be believed in. But if they said that they would not leave Egypt until the occurrence of an event which they knew was not likely to occur in the lifetime of any man in that House, they were practically telling Europe that they were going to break the pledges which they had solemnly given. The right hon. Member for Bodmin had spoken of Egypt having been handed over to her creditors. He protested against this notion of handing over a country to its creditors as if it was a limited liability company. Why was it that this doctrine had not been applied in the case of other European countries? There was hardly a self-governing country in the world that had borrowed money abroad and that had not afterwards gone into bankruptcy and refused to pay. Even Italy had taxed its *coupons*, which was a gross breach of faith with the creditors. Why had not Italy been forced to pay to the uttermost farthing? The reason why the doctrine had been applied in the case of Egypt was because her people were helpless. If Egypt had been allowed to go on her own way, the fellaheen might have been subjected to some injustice, but they would not have been as heavily taxed as they were to-day. Sir Edgar Vincent, in his book on the Finances of the Ottoman Empire, pointed out that since the English had taken possession of Egypt the yield of the taxation of tobacco had increased sevenfold. That showed how the policy of the British administration of Egypt had been to screw the last farthing out of the people for the benfit of the bondholders. In fact, the policy which was being pursued in the case of Egypt was the same as that which had been pursued in Ireland for so many years. They had been told that there was to be no further expenditure on the Egyptian expedition this year. But was the financial year meant or the calendar year? They were not told how far the Government intended to go. Perhaps to the Mountains of the Moon. What they did know was that further sums would be demanded time after time for these expeditions which did not serve the interests of the mass of the people either of Ireland or Great Britain. They were told that these expeditions would destroy the tyranny of the Khalifate; but, bad as the Khalif might be, he doubted whether he was much worse than some of the other Mussulman potentates who had been backed by British power—for instance, the Sultan of Morocco. The cruelties of the Khalif might go on for a long time if it were not that the Government thought the territory could be obtained without much trouble and without any European Power interfering. He should protest against this proposal at every stage and at every opportunity allowed to the Irish Members. They might try whether worry might not bit by bit force the Government to deal with the definite grievances of the Irish people. He believed greatly in the power of worry, and he believed that France and Russia had done an excellent bit of work in protesting as they had done. Though their protests might not have kept back this expedition, still in the end those protests would tell, because they had prevented the Government from regularising their position as they might have done. The Irish Members, therefore, would "worry, worry, worry," until they forced the Government to pay attention to Ireland's definite grievances, and as an instalment of that "worry" he moved the reduction of the Vote by £72,500.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 29; Noes, 139.—(Division List, No. 18—appended.)

AYES.

Allen, Wm. (Newc.-under-Lyme)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Brigg, John
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Gilhooly, James
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Macaleese, Daniel
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Pinkerton, John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Ure, Alexander
Wedderburn, Sir William
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Knox and Mr. James O'Connor.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, A. H. Smith- (Hunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Brstl.)
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Bigham, John Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bucknill, Thomas Townsend
Butcher, John George
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curzon, Rt. Hn. G. N. (Lnc., S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dane, Richard M.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Mnc'r.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewes
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's.)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'y)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hopkinson, Alfred
Houston, R. P.
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Sw'nsea)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool.)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
McCalmont, Maj.-Gn. (Ant'm. N)
McKillop, James
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Oldroyd, Mark
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur

Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strauss, Arthur
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

On the return of the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS, after the usual interval,

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) resumed the Debate on the main question. He said there could be no doubt of the strength of the controversial case against the policy and proposals of the Government in regard to the Soudan; and that some of the language used in presenting those proposals might be open to exception. In the first place they were confronted with the problem of "Who is to pay?" and with the unsatisfactory results of the attempts which had been made to solve it. Then there was the query whether the Dongola expedition was just what was needed, when it took place, to soothe the lively suspicions of the European Powers regarding the motives underlying our action in trying to save the Armenians. There were also the questions whether the security of the province which had been recovered for Egypt could be set against the massacres which had taken place under the Sultan, and whether anything was better calculated than the Dongola expedition to reduce our position of "splendid isolation" to one of sheer impotency at Constantinople. There was further the unfortunate impression that had been made by the number, the variety, and the general futility of the reasons offered in favour of the expedition. There was also the feeling amongst those who particularly desired the evacuation of Egypt, that the road to that goal hardly lay through Dongola. He was not sure that that view was entirely correct; but the feeling existed on both sides of the House and everywhere abroad that the occupation of Dongola was a step rather against the evacuation of Egypt than in that direction. It was not surprising, therefore, that there was a strong opposition to the Vote. But there were strong elementary facts connected with the present situation which underlay all else. They had to regard accomplished facts which relate to the future of Egypt and to the policy of the Government as the acting trustee for Egypt. The expedition, however ill-timed, was a success. Dongola was occupied. The weakness of the Khalifa was exposed. So long as the Khalifa was all-powerful, or was supposed to be, he was able to hold the Nile against all comers. He stopped the development of Egypt; but he was the foe to all advances upon the Nile valley. The expedition to Dongola had changed all that. In his view the pivot of the whole question of the movement into the Soudan was the condition of the Khalifa's power. Once that power was broken up, whether from internal causes, or external causes, the re-occupation of the Nile valley became easy and opportune. The break-up of the Khalifa's power meant anarchy in the regions over which he had exercised his despotism, and a condition of weakness upon the Egyptian frontier that would oblige us to interfere. But it involved more than that. It created a standing temptation to other Powers, whether advancing from the West, or through Abyssinia, to establish claims in the Nile valley. Therefore, if we did not allow Egypt to go forward we would leave interests on the Upper Nile open to others. Indeed, by standing deliberately aloof now we would almost invite other Powers to go in, to the prejudice of Egypt, for whom we were trustee, as well as to our own prejudice, and while our interest in the matter was important that of Egypt was vital. Having occupied Uganda, our influence should extend until it met the influence of Egypt. He believed that this policy would rather remove obstacles to our evacuation of Egypt than tend to unnecessarily prolong our occupation, for one of the great objections to quitting the country was the want of a settled frontier for Egypt towards the south. The break-up of the power of the Khalifa was therefore the beginning and end of his belief that the forward policy had become the right policy. It was right first because, whether they liked it or not, it was practical and opportune; and, secondly, because it was necessary to prevent new dangers and developments which were dormant so long as the Khalifa's power was not known to be so broken as to invite attack on the part of other Powers. It might, of course, be said that while acting professedly in the interests of Egypt we were doing it with our own money. But so far as that was concerned Egypt left alone could do it without us, if the Powers did not hold her purse-strings, and if they drew those strings absurdly tight—as they had often done for political reasons to suit themselves—he did not see why we should not ease the tension for reasons which suited us. It suited us to take that course now, for being on the Upper Nile we wanted the valley opened, and we preferred that it should be occupied by a Power that would at least be neutral. Our obligations to Egypt and to ourselves in this matter coincided, apart from the question of our actual occupation of Egypt at the present moment. Therefore, however much the Government might be blamed, and as he thought rightly blamed, for the time and the manner in which this expedition was conceived and carried out, he was unable to vote against the granting of the sum of money which was asked for.

*MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.) said the Soudan expedition, so far as it had gone, was not alone absolutely necessary, but its extension further up the river Nile was most essential if this country desired to retain the place it occupied among the nations of the world. England was not merely a European Power; it was a great Asiatic Power also; and Egypt being a country with a double face—one towards the Mediterranean and the other towards the Red Sea—it was absolutely necessary if we wished to retain India, and to continue to be the predominant Power in Asia, that we should see that Egypt retained its security, and became a civilised, powerful, and well-governed country. As regarded our power to hold Egypt from India, he would remind them that about 100 years ago its feasibility was proved triumphantly and successfully by the great Lord Wellesley. At the very time when England was engaged in a death struggle with France he sent a few thousand troops from India, landed them at Kosseir on the Red Sea, sent them 100 miles across country to the Nile, and got them down by river to Lower Egypt, with the result that the great Napoleon was obliged to evacuate Egypt, as his troops were caught in a trap. That was a power that we still had—and still more in this age of steam. ["Hear, hear!"] He tendered the Chancellor of the Exchequer his warmest thanks for the patriotic and bold spirit with which he had asserted the position that England ought to occupy in this matter. It was a great and serious trust that had devolved upon this nation, and it had devolved upon them by the deliberate action of France, when invited to join, in refusing the invitation. This country had proved how successfully it could make Egypt happy, flourishing, and powerful. The average Englishman might not know all the reasons for these matters of high policy; but he believed, nevertheless, that any assembly of operatives or artisans, or of men of any class in the country would say, if the facts were laid fairly and fully before them, that they ought not to abandon the position they had occupied in Egypt.

*MR. W. A. MCARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell) said he wished to give the reasons which induced him to give his vote in favour of Her Majesty's Government. He did not propose to enter into the earlier question raised by the right hon. Member for Montrose. He felt, as he supposed all of them on that side of the House felt, that to a considerable extent very grave mistakes had been made by Her Majesty's Government in the conduct of this matter. Of course, he spoke without knowledge as to any possible European complications that might have ensued if the Government had taken the course that he would have desired, but he thought it would have been better if the Government had felt themselves able boldly and plainly last year to tell the House of Commons what they intended to do. It was a course, whatever might be the opinion of individual Members of that House, that he felt perfectly certain would have gained them credit in the country, and would have made them more popular in the country even amongst the Members of the Liberal Party. He thought it was a pity that the Government last year did not feel justified in saying that they thought the time had come to undertake what was practically the reconquest of the Soudan and the establishment of Egyptian or English influence up to Khartoum—for his own part, he should not be at all afraid to say beyond Khartoum. The expedition to Dongola had been a brilliant success; there was no question that we had not only conquered a former enemy of this country, but that we had delivered a vast population who regarded us as their saviour, from a grossly tyrannical and unjust rule. [*Ministerial cheers.*]

Mr. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): When were the Soudanese the enemy of this country?

*Mr. McARTHUR said that whether the Soudanese were the enemies of this country or not they had been under the dominion of the most tyrannical and cruel Power in this world. Any one who had read the extraordinary book written by Slatin Pasha, and who yet said that the Soudanese were not a nation who ought to have been delivered from such gross tyranny, was not a politician imbued with the ideas that dominated the old Liberal Party. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Whatever in his view might be the mistakes which the Government had made in the conduct of this matter—and he thought that grave mistakes had been made—he was compelled by his conscience, and by the declarations which he had made not only in that House, but to his own constituents, to give his vote in favour of a forward rather than a retrograde policy. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He had always claimed and been allowed to take a perfectly free hand in regard to foreign or colonial affairs, and he never would admit, whether he was a Member of a Government or of an Opposition, that either foreign or colonial affairs were matters to be brought within the purview of Party politics in that House. [*Ministerial cheers.*] He had said on a former occasion that he was prepared to support any definite policy proposed by a responsible Government in regard to Egypt, but what would become of the vast population we had taken under our protection if we left Egypt? It was quite impossible for us to leave Egypt, even if we wished to do so, without leaving the country as we found it, without restoring to Egypt those provinces which were hers when we first intervened in the affairs of the country. He did not say that was a policy which would pay England in a monetary sense, but it was a policy which made for righteousness—[*Ministerial cheers*]—for civilisation, for peace in those disturbed districts of the world, for liberty for an enslaved and oppressed people. [*Cheers.*] He did not agree with those who thought that England had enough territory to take care of, that England was not capable of taking charge of more native races than she had charge of at present; and, holding the views he did, he felt it would be unworthy in him if he refrained from voting for the proposition Her Majesty's Government had now made. [*Cheers.*]

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said he would not have intervened in the Debate but for the unfortunate speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast. His hon. Friend alluded to him and other naval men. If naval men could have heard that speech, not a single one of them would have approved of it, for a more chicken-hearted and miserable speech it was impossible to conceive. He was amazed that such weak sentiments should come from a generally strong man, and he entered his emphatic protest against such views as the hon. Gentleman had expressed being uttered by a supporter, or a pretended supporter, of Her Majesty's Government. He was equally amazed at the speech of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for the Forest of Dean, whom he had always regarded as a strong Imperialist. He expected anything from the hon. Member for Northampton, but he was surprised that the right hon. Baronet should utter the sentiments he had given expression to. Two admirable speeches had, however, been delivered from the Opposition benches, and they could well be put as a set-off to the miserable speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast. The Government had nothing to fear from their supporters. There had been no halting or hesitation as regarded Egypt, whatever might have happened in respect to their educational policy. The Members who sat around him were prepared to support as one man the forward policy in Egypt. The situation had greatly altered since some naval men did express rather strong views in regard to the Suez Canal. He remembered Lord Charles Beresford saying that the Suez Canal would be no use to us in case of war, and that it might be our duty to block it. Those, however, were now ancient opinions. If we wanted to evacuate Egypt we could not do so with honour. We had a duty to perform before the world. We were in Egypt by the force of circumstances, and there we would have to remain for some indefinite period, whether we liked it or not. Whether it involved a million now or to-morrow, we could not acquit ourselves of our responsibilities. Allusion had been made by the hon. Member for West Belfast to an international agreement. We had held joint Government and joint control, but that did not answer. If joint control by two Powers did not answer, was it likely that joint control by four or five Powers would answer? Naval men unanimously regretted the necessity cast on the Conservative Government in 1886, to agree to the policy of neutralising the Suez Canal. It was the Government which hon. Members opposite supported which landed us in that unfortunate policy. In 1885 the Conservatives came into office but not into power. The French Ambassador called upon Lord Salisbury's Government to take action under the Note sent to the Powers by Lord Granville, and Lord Salisbury very propery replied that there would be a General Election in the autumn, and he was not sure he would come back with a majority. After the election the Conservatives were quickly turned out, and in came the Government led by Mr. Gladstone. The French Ambassador approached Mr. Gladstone, asking him to ratify the action of Lord Granville. Mr. Gladstone said "No, I am about to bring in a Home Rule Bill, and whatever happens to that Bill, there must be a Dissolution upon it," and, God be praised, the Bill was defeated. There was a Dissolution, and the French Ambassador was put off on that score very properly. Lord Salisbury came into power with a large majority, and then the French Ambassador returned to the charge. Nothing amazed and delighted him more than to see the sagacity which their distinguished Leader manifested on that occasion. Lord Salisbury would not, having regard to the safety of our Indian possessions, agree to any policy of neutrality unless provision was made for the passing of troops through Egypt in case of the canal being blocked. The French Ambassador disapproved of that proposal, but ultimately agreed to not more than 1,000 troops passing through Egypt in one day, and to arms being packed in arm chests. Where would we be if we evacuated Egypt? How would we pass our troops through Egypt if the canal were blocked? Being in Egypt were we not in a better position to guard the neutrality of the canal than we should be if Egypt were in the hands of another Power. The Government had a moral obligation in this matter from which they could not depart, and hon. Members ought to be like a band of brothers, hand in hand in support of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cornwall (Mr. Courtney) in his charming speech made allusion to the good effect of our rule in Egypt. The details were worthy of attention. We have abolished forced labour, we have abolished the courbash, we have reorganised the finances, and we have largely extended the irrigating waters of the Nile. So that now, districts which were once barren were fertile. The occupation of Dongola was, in itself, an argument against the policy of withdrawal. One hon. Member had said he thought the policy of the Government was ill-timed, but it appeared to him that the success of the expedition was a pretty strong proof that it was well-timed. ["Hear, hear!"] But he thoroughly agreed with that hon. Member when he said that, having gone to Dongola, the operations should go further, should go on to Khartoum, and even further than that. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] For his own part, he did not care how far the Government went; the further they went on to the reconquest of the Soudan the better he should be pleased. He had always supported the forward policy of England in Egypt, and he hoped that policy would be continued. For those reasons he should heartily vote for the grant. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that for upwards of 10 years he had consistently supported in that House the policy of the right hon. Member for Montrose and the hon. Member for Northampton on this question. Ever since the first occupation of Egypt he had taken every opportunity of protesting against that occupation. The hon. Member for St. Austell had said that the English people were able to take care of and to civilise more native races than we now had sway over. In his judgment the experience they had had recently of certain parts of South Africa—Matabeleland, for instance—were not calculated to encourage humane men in the desire that we should carry on the work of civilisation farther; and for his own part, he agreed with the statement made by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean that the general results of European interference in the interior of Africa had been enormously to increase suffering and loss of life among the native population. Civilisation in Africa, as understood by European interference, meant the establishment of European vices—the introduction of drink and murderous weapons; and travellers had stated that the track of European civilisation was marked by the skeletons of hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants who had been cruelly slain. He objected to this Vote, in the first place, because it was in reality a grant to Egypt, and in the shape of a mortgage on the country, which would be used by England as an excuse and a justification for indefinitely postponing her occupation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the money was to be advanced to Egypt as a loan, though it was called in the Estimates a grant in aid; but no attempt was made by the Government to explain how the money was ever to be repaid. No answer had been made to the statement of the right hon. Member for Bodmin and the hon. Member for Northampton that, in view of the present condition of Egypt, it was impossible for the Egyptian Government to repay the loan for at least a great number of years. Part of this loan was to be expended in connection with the construction of a railway, and until someone came along and paid England for it, it would be used as an ample argument by England for retaining possession of it. In face of this, was it any matter for surprise that Russia and France should have protested against this loan? The Government seemed to have given the go-by to this important fact. England stood pledged in the face of the whole of Europe to evacuate Egypt as soon as her work was done there. [*Ministerial cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Yes; but would any responsible Minister rise in his place and say that that work included the reconquest of the Soudan, and all the serious consequences which undoubtedly would result from it? ["Hear, hear!"] Europe could interpret the action of the Government in this matter in no other sense than as a declaration that England held Egypt, and meant to hold it. What he said last year he would now repeat, that he believed the Dongola campaign, or any other campaign for the reconquest of Egypt, was a matter of trifling importance as compared with the opinion of Russia and France on our proceedings. He never doubted that the expedition to Dongola, with the superior weapons, discipline, and command of the Egyptian troops, would be successful; and brave as the Dervishes undoubtedly were, there could be no doubt that any further expedition forward towards Khartoum would be equally successful; but he held that the troubles of this country, and of Egypt, would begin in real earnest when Khartoum was reached. Our embarrassments with Russia and France would then greatly increase. He therefore further strongly objected to the Vote for the reason that he believed it would be calculated to have long, far-reaching, and dangerous consequences to the relations of this country with France. He objected also to the form of the Vote. Last year they had a distinct pledge from the Government, when they were defending their action in the beginning of the Dongola campaign, that no English money beyond the mere expense of the officers would be asked for. But now, after the expedition had been brought to a termination, they were asked to vote the sum of £798,000 to be applied to Egypt. Yet we had no account furnished—no details given to us such as were afforded in the ordinary Estimates of the year. They had no means, therefore, of checking this account. He should like to know who certified it? The Chancellor of the Exchequer in bringing in the Vote did not even deign to give the Committee any details as to how the money was to be spent. Was the account to be checked in the Egyptian Treasury, or by the Comptroller General and the Financial Department, who looked over the Estimates and certified the expenditure by the House of Commons. They were entitled, before they were asked to vote this money, to know whether a new system was to be started in the House of Commons of voting large sums of money to the Egyptian Government, the expenditure of which was to be checked and accounted for, not by the Audit Office of this country but by some institution in Egypt. They had no means of knowing whether a portion of the money might not be disposed of for some purpose different to that for which that House voted it.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I can assure the hon. Member, if it is any comfort to him, that I went through the whole details of this expenditure with Mr. Dawkins, of the Egyptian Finance Department. He accounted to me for the whole of the details, and I am perfectly satisfied. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR W. HARCOURT: But will the accounts be laid on the Table?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I have no objection to lay the accounts on the Table. [*Cheers.*]

MR. DILLON said that was a very important concession on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. There was another matter on which he would like to say a word or two. They were told last year, and they had been told again this year, that the British Government had nothing to do with this expedition practically speaking—that it was an Egyptian expedition and that it would be undertaken by the Egyptian Government. He thought that it was positively absurd, it was a perfect mockery, for a responsible Minister to stand up in the House of Commons and talk about the Egyptian Government doing this and agreeing to that, when they knew perfectly well that the Egyptian Government sat on the Front Treasury Bench, and that the Khedive was a mere puppet in the hands of British Ministers, and was not allowed to do anything except as Lord Cromer ordered him. They had heard, through this Debate, a great deal of talk about the horrible and diabolical tyranny of the Khalifa, and the desire of the English Government to put an end to it and to set free the subject populations of the Soudan, who were represented to them as groaning under this tyranny. But he had never heard any proof brought forward as to the character of this diabolical tyranny, except the book of Slatin Pasha. It was a most interesting book, but he must confess that he should not be disposed to receive all his statements as gospel truth without some corroborative evidence. He really thought it was an outrageous thing to justify this expedition of the testimony of Slatin Pasha's book, which was quoted in that House as proof positive and sufficient of the tyranny of the Khalifa. Personally, he had his grave doubts about this "frightful tyranny." He was certain of one thing—that the tyranny of the Khalifa was Christian civilised government compared with the conduct of their ally the Sultan of Turkey. He defied anyone in that House to prove that the Khalifa, who was denounced as a most infamous tyrant, had ever been guilty of the cruelty of which the Sultan of Turkey had been guilty in the last two years. It was all humbug—it was to quote the now classical words of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, a sample of "unctuous rectitude." The Chancellor of the Exchequer was wroth because his speech was described as an exasperating and defiant one. He should be very much surprised if that was not the interpretation put upon it to-morrow by the European Press. The right hon. Gentleman said the judgment of the Court of Appeal created a position in Egypt that was intolerable.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That might become intolerable.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman said that next year, in the ordinary course, the constitution of the Courts would come up for review, and it would be necessary to raise the whole question of jurisdiction and composition. In what connection would that reconsideration be conducted? To lessen the power of France and Russia in Egypt, and for no other object. ["Hear, hear!"] To put a check on the power of veto of France and Russia would be the object, and certainly France and Russia would exhibit more patience and forbearance than he gave those Governments credit for if they quietly acquiesced in a rearrangement of the Court of Appeal when it was avowedly made to reduce their power and influence. It reminded him of proceedings in Ireland. The Government did not like the composition of the Court, but never quarrelled with the Court until a verdict was recorded against them, and then the remedy proposed was to pack the Court, to get a verdict or to destroy its jurisdiction altogether. France and Russia would have something to say upon that matter, and he would be very much surprised if, before the country was engaged much further in this great invasion of the Soudan, we did not find a deal more concernment with a country much nearer to England than the Soudan, and the scene of operations or friction transferred from Wady Halfa and Dongola to much nearer home. These were the reasons why he opposed the whole policy of this grant. There was another aspect of the case to which he would only allude for a moment, for he would be out of order if he were to bring it into debate. This policy of invasion of the Soudan entailed the building up of a gigantic empire in the heart of Africa. This was what the Tory Party meant, and if these provinces were conquered they would not be handed back to Egypt to be governed, for that would be ridiculous. A great empire was to be built up in the heart of Africa, a great railway and various other developments would follow, entailing a great increase in the Army, of which the beginning was already seen. He would not enter into these matters in detail, but, as an Irishman, and believing that the people of Ireland did not share in the advantages of enormous military and naval expenditure, he protested from an Irish point of view against every addition to that expenditure, and he protested especially against this, which would not bring the blessings of peace and prosperity or any kind of advantage to the inhabitants of the Soudan, but fresh wars, fresh massacres and miseries.

Mr. R. PIERPOINT (Warrington) said he had heard with considerable interest allusions made with a sort of model piety from the other side of the House as to the way this country should fulfil its engagements and the promise given long ago to go out of Egypt. ["Hear, hear!"] But were engagements only to be kept by this country, and by no other country? Had France never entered into any engagements concerning the Regency of Tunis? France had entered into engagements concerning Tunis, engagements as precise and binding as ever this country entered into in regard to Egypt. One or two extracts from official correspondence will show the nature of these engagements. Lord Lyons to Earl Granville, May 10, 1881:—

> "He (M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire) begged me to report at once to Her Majesty's Government in the name of the Government of the Republic and in his own name, and in the most formal and explicit manner, the assurance that the French Government did not intend to annex Tunis. If it should be found necessary to occupy for a time certain points in the Regency with French troops, the occupation would, His Excellency said, be of an essentially provisional character, and would cease as soon as sufficient security had been obtained for the punctual execution by the Bey of the new arrangements, which would be effected by the Treaty which he would be required to make."

Then, again. M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire to Lord Lyons, May 16, 1881:—

> "Your Excellency remembers that on several occasions in my conversations with you I repudiated the idea of the conquest or annexation to France of any part of Tunisian territory. I have no difficulty in repeating here what I have already told you. . . We have no more desire to annex Bizerta than any other part of Tunis."

He knew Tunis pretty well, and had, he thought, been more often there than the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles Dilke) had been to Egypt, and he was there three weeks ago. He had known Tunis for a good many years, and he could see nothing whatever in Tunis to lead to the belief that France had the slightest intention of ever fulfilling these engagements; apparently they had not the slightest intention of doing so. He remembered the city of Tunis when the French quarter of the town was very little better than waste land, and it is now built over with streets and boulevards, with French names, and no doubt the French had done exceedingly good work in the city and Regency of Tunis. M. St. Hilaire engaged that France would not annex Bizerta, but, in fact, the French had not only annexed it, but when he was there two years ago they had formed a naval station there. They had dredged the Lake of Bizerta, they had cut a channel between the sea and the lake, they had thrown out two piers into the sea, and they were forming a naval station with forts and guns in the rear of the lake. For himself, he confessed, though perhaps his opinion was not worth much, he regarded the Bay of Bizerta as a dangerous place to lay a fleet in, but it would be a dangerous place for any country at war with France with the French torpedo boats in the lake. That was what had taken place in regard to French engagements so far as Tunis was concerned, and this was an example of how other countries kept their engagements. One very strong reason why this expedition of the Egyptian Government, with the aid and advice of the English Government, should make the advance in the Soudan was that any Power, whether barbarous or civilised, that held the Blue Nile and the Atbara had the fortune and the very life of Egypt in the hollow of its hand. As Sir Samuel Baker had pointed out, it was possible for such a Power, "by throwing a dam across the empty bed during the dry season, to effectually deflect the stream when risen by the Abyssinian rains, and thus prevent the necessary flow towards Egypt," which could be ruined either by flood or famine. Sir Samuel, who was a great authority on these matters in the Soudan, said in a letter he wrote to *The Times* in 1888:

> "I have seen a spot about 230 miles from the mouth of the Atbara where the river might be deflected without difficulty, and be forced to an eastern course towards the Red Sea."

At the end of the same letter he said:—

> "If I were myself an enemy of Egypt, I know the place where I should commence the fatal work upon the river Atbara."

He thought these were very strong considerations, indeed, as to why this expedition should take place; besides the considerations which had already been given. He would not suggest that it was the intention of France or Russia, or both together, to take possession of the Blue Nile and the Atbara River. He would merely repeat that any Power, whether civilised or barbarous, which held the Atbara and the Blue Nile could actually dictate terms to the Egyptians themselves or any superior Power that held Egypt. That was a terrible danger to contemplate, and England, being in a position of a foster-mother to Egypt, would be very wrong, indeed, not to take every possible means to maintain the safety of the country she had taken in charge.

Mr. PHILIP STANHOPE (Burnley) was bound to say he took a very different view in this matter from that which had been expressed by the hon. Member for Warrington. That hon. Member had laid it down as his first proposition that France, having made certain engagements—which he did not think could be denied—with regard to Tunis, France had not respected those engagements, and was at present in possession of Tunis. He would point out to the hon. Member that, at all events, so far as Tunis was concerned, France had regulated her position in Tunis by diplomatic exchanges with the foreign Powers, and consequently the positon of France in Tunis would be a legitimate and legal position, whereas our position in Egypt was something of a very different kind. The hon. Gentleman had told them that very often foreign questions and difficulties were initiated in that House. Was there ever a speech delivered in that House more likely to initiate foreign trouble than the one just delivered? It was an unprovoked attack on France. France, so far as he knew, was not called into question in that Debate except indirectly as regarded Egypt. But the hon. Member actually went out of his way to make a violent and hostile attack on France, and that was what he called smoothing down difficulties in the House of Commons! He desired not to treat so much the financial as the international aspects of the case, and what, he asked, would be the result to-morrow morning of Continental appreciation of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? He ventured to predict that it would be said in every capital of Europe that the British Government had now entered upon a new and determined policy with regard to Egypt, that they had made up their minds to disregard obligations and engagements, to flout Russia and France, and instead of allaying the irritation of those countries to provoke and increase it. That was the Government which was at the same time seeking to establish the concert of Europe! The most dangerous and fatal thing with regard to the Armenian difficulties had been that this country had not a good understanding with France and Russia, and was unable to go openly to them as friends without causes of difficulty and complaint between them. He was quite certain that if the Egyptian question had not been an open sore they should have had the concurrence and assistance of France in the settlement of the affairs of Turkey, and thousands of Armenian lives would have been saved. This was an international question of the gravest importance, and one which was bound to expand and extend as time goes on. Did the Government suppose that by what was called "a firm policy" and "putting their foot down"—one of the favourite expressions of hon. Gentlemen opposite—they were going to settle the Egyptian question, and that the French nation—an avowedly high-spirited nation—were going to tamely accept the fact that they had announced their intention of resisting any kind of interference on their part? France had a perfect right by international agreement to take all the steps she had taken in the matter. He did not say that she had been wise. The French Government had often been extremely ill-advised. They would have been wiser had they pursued a less bickering policy. But they were perfectly justified in the general attitude they had taken, and by denouncing the French Government they had not settled the Egyptian question, but possibly had raised international questions of the highest importance. The hon. and gallant Admiral in his breezy speech referred to the neutrality of the Suez Canal, but did not attempt to controvert the statement of the hon. Member for West Belfast—a naval expert—that in the opinion of naval men the Suez Canal would be absolutely useless in time of war. When we first occupied Egypt it was believed that we occupied the nearest military route to India. But this view was now exploded, and the *raison d'être* for our occupying Egypt for strategical advantages no longer exists. We were called upon to pay a million for what had already been done, and what was to be done in Egypt—in the form of an advance which Egypt was to pay when it could. It was a mortgage upon Egypt, and no doubt it was thought that, as mortgagee, we should have a better claim on Egypt than we already possessed. The most important part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's declaration was that, when the continuation of the Mixed Court of Appeal came up next year, the Government intended to assume a different attitude, and he, himself, supposed they intended to say what hon. Gentlemen opposite had not the courage to say openly:—

> "We have done all these things. We have spent this money. We have advanced into the interior of Africa. Egypt is unable to bear the burden of this enterprise, consequently we, the English Government, having done all this, can claim to announce that our occupation is not a temporary one, which we formerly said it would be, but the permanent occupation of the country."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I said nothing of the kind.

MR. STANHOPE said he knew the right hon. Gentleman did not, but all he had said led to that conclusion. It was the conclusion that would be drawn from his words by every responsible person in Europe. That being so, was it right that we should make this profound change in our foreign policy and put this enormous charge on our Exchequer, that we should free ourselves from obligations and engagements entered into years ago, without having this matter more fully discussed with the correspondence and papers before us. ["Hear, hear!"]

CAPT. BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness) denied that the Chancellor of the Exchequer used words provocative to France in his speech. Was it wise on the part of the hon. Member who had just spoken (who, although he had not occupied a responsible position in office, was well known on the Continent) to put the worst interpretation that could be put upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech, and misinterpret and caricature his meaning? Was it wise on the part of an hon. Member who advocated international arbitration and peace to try as far as he could to provoke the underlying grievances that existed. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. friend had observed that France had put herself right with other countries by diplomatic arrangements. That was no doubt true, but was it untrue of England in relation to Egypt? Could it be said that this country had not constantly undertaken diplomatic intercourse with France and other countries in relation to Egypt? He recognised to the full France's susceptibilities in regard to Egypt, but we had our susceptibilities also, though he did not think that in either case they were so enormous that they could not be settled ultimately by diplomatic arrangements. Differing as he did from hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to the evacuation of Egypt, he was one of those, and he believed there were many on his side of the House, who would gladly be out of it; yet he strongly supported the recent action of Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member for Mayo said he had always been consistent in his opposition to our policy in Egypt, and remarked that the occupation of the country in the interests of civilisation had been marked by misery and slaughter. It was true that the advance of civilisation in its inception had always been accompanied by many dreadful acts, but no man could read the history of the Continent of Africa without recognising that the atrocities of civilisation, if hon. Gentlemen liked to call them so, faded into a shadow by the side of the slaughter and misery which existed before its advance. There could be no man in the House who could say that the rule of the Khalifa had not been accompanied with terrible cruelties. His right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin had given a very clear account of what he considered to be the operation of the Mixed Tribunal and of the Caisse; but he thought his right hon. Friend scarcely left on the House an impression of the true interpretation of the rules which, as he understood, guided the Mixed Tribunal. His right hon. Friend told the House that the Caisse had control over certain surpluses to apply them in particular ways, although there were circumstances when the surplus remaining could be used for extraordinary and exceptional purposes; and the right hon. Gentleman went on to point out cases in which it could be so used, and he left the impression on the House that he was quoting cases laid down by the rules of the Tribunal. But the fact of the matter was that the Caisse was allowed to use their surplus for extraordinary circumstances, and the question was whether the advance to Dongola could be considered an extraordinary circumstance or not. That of course was a matter of opinion, but his right hon. Friend would, he was sure, see that the illustrations he gave were not drawn from the rules which governed the Caisse, and that the real interpretation was to be gathered from the word "extraordinary."

MR. COURTNEY: What I endeavoured to explain was this—I wanted to put before the Committee the view I understood the Mixed Tribunal took of the interpretation of the law.

CAPTAIN BETHELL said he knew his right hon. Friend intended to put that view before the Committee, and he was only telling him that a wrong impression was left in his mind, and he thought in the minds of other Gentlemen. He would now like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a rather complicated question, and it was this. The right hon. Gentleman had not told the Committee why the Egyptian Government agreed to go to the arbitrament of the Mixed Tribunal. He presumed that the Egyptian Government were advised by their British advisers, and it was rather difficult to see why it was necessary for the Egyptian Government to appeal to the Mixed Tribunal. A good deal had been said in reference both to France and Russia by various speakers. Personally he believed our true policy was, as far as we could, to work harmoniously with France and Russia. Touching them as we did in so many quarters of the globe, we were more likely to be benefited by friendly intercourse than by meeting with objections on questions of policy at many turns. At the same time we had our interests in Egypt to guard, and, though he regretted that we were there, and that it was impossible to withdraw, he fully recognised that, while admitting the rights and susceptibilities of France, we must continue to guard our own, without, he hoped, sacrificing the friendship of other countries.

Mr. J. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvon, Eifion) said that he had never lost an opportunity since he first became a Member of the House, many years ago, of recording by his vote his strongest opposition to the occupation of Egypt. He had always done so, mainly on the ground that we were pledged by our word of honour to give up that occupation. That that pledge had been given solemnly and in unequivocal terms had been admitted by successive Governments both Conservative and Liberal. He should have thought that in an assembly of honourable men and a nation of honest people an admission of that kind would absolutely conclude the question, and that it would have been unnecessary to go into arguments of expediency. But if questions of expediency only were considered, he held that in this respect as well as in private life "honesty is the policy." It had been generally admitted that all the troubles in relation to the Eastern Question during the last two years, and the humiliating position which Great Britain had occupied, arose from the fact that we were universally distrusted on the continent of Europe. What was the reason of that distrust? Was it necessary to go further in search of an answer than the admission that, having gone to Egypt under a distinct pledge, we had calmly and unblushingly broken our word. It was argued that we were entitled to break our word in respect of Egypt, because France had done so in respect of Tunis. That amounted to this—"true, we have acted dishonestly; true, we are great rascals, but then the French are bigger rascals than we are." Was that an argument that could be addressed to any self-respecting people or nation. The conduct of other nations was not the measure of our honour, and we ought, out of self-respect, to carry out our obligation. The hon. Member for St. Austell said that whether we were right or wrong the mistake could not be rectified, but he omitted to state why the promise we gave was that we would withdraw as soon as Egypt was strong enough to maintain itself. But now we saw that Egypt was strong enough not only to maintain itself but to conquer the Soudan. Again, it was asked if we retired, what would become of the Egyptians. We had been in occupation for 15 years, but Egypt existed long before that, and from the earliest dawn of history down to 15 years the Egyptians had been able to govern themselves and carry on their affairs without the supervision of the English Government. What they had done in the past they could do in the future. The Chancellor of the Exchequer put the argument solely on the ground of philanthropy. With respect to that argument, he thought he was justified in applying to it the same description as the right hon. Gentleman himself applied to an argument of the Welsh Members in reference to Welsh disestablishment. The Welsh Members had urged that the cause of religion even in the Established Church would be benefited by disestablishment, and the right hon. Gentleman denounced that argument as a piece of nauseous cant. He thought he was entitled to retort and say that the argument that we were going to declare war against the Soudanese on grounds of philanthropy was a piece of nauseous hypocrisy. If Germany approved of our breaking our word, was that a good reason for breaking it? The reason of Germany's attitude was apparent. Since the war of 1870, the policy of Germany had been to isolate and weaken France as much as possible. Therefore, any policy which was likely to set France and England by the ears was certain to meet with the approval of Germany. These were the considerations which induced Prince Bismarck to suggest that England should interfere in Egypt. We were bound by our pledges and every consideration of honour to evacuate Egypt, and, therefore, he should vote against the proposal of the Government.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY: I hope that the Committee will now consent to bring this Debate to a conclusion. ["Hear, hear!"] The Members on both the Front Benches who are concerned in the matter have now spoken, and several independent Members on both sides have also spoken. We are dealing with a subject of great international delicacy and complexity, and I cannot help thinking that probably all has been said on this subject that is to the public advantage. I do not wish to press my view on the subject, but I express that view as a Minister of the Crown—["hear, hear!"]—and not merely as a Minister in charge of the business of the House and desiring to bring a Debate to a conclusion. I honestly do not think, after all that has been said on both sides of the question, that any further public object can be served by the continuation of this discussion. I do think it, therefore, for the general advantage that we should draw the Debate to a rapid conclusion, and I hope the Committee will take this suggestion in good part. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that he quite appreciated the spirit of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, whose advice, he thought, might very well have been given at an earlier hour, and perhaps applied to right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. He rose for the purpose of putting two or three questions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Was the new railway to be a continuation of the old one? (The Chancellor of the Exchequer: "No.") Was the cost of the railway already made included in the money which they were asked to vote, and was any useful traffic developing? The only excuse for constructing these desert railways was that they would open up trade. Were there any returns showing that in the way of business the first railway had been a success? With regard to the second railway, they had been told that the material required had been ordered by the Government, and that the Egyptian Government would defray the rest of the cost of making the line. He wanted to know why the Egyptian Government could not pay the whole bill. Then, did the sum of £270,000, which they were asked to vote for material, include the cost of material for building the line or only the rolling stock? He heartily reciprocated the appeal which the Leader of the House had made that nothing should be said in that discussion to make the position of this country difficult abroad. ["Hear, hear!"] He thought that a more courteous disposition towards France might have been exhibited by occupants of the Front Ministerial Bench who spoke earlier in the evening. The somewhat bitter discussion at the commencement of the Debate could not be viewed as having a tendency to promote the peace of the world. He thought that a great deal of excuse might be made for any resentment on the part of France for the incidents in Egypt. We ought to try to allay any bitter feelings that might be entertained by France towards this country. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Sir W. HARCOURT: I do not desire to encourage further discussion, but upon the financial question a suggestion has been made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in voting this large amount of money. We should not introduce the practice of voting these large sums without some full information being given to the House of Commons. I understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will lay on the Table of the House the details of this expenditure. That would be a security we ought to take in pursuance of the practice of the House of Commons—namely, the presenting of the most detailed information as to the expenditure of a Vote of public money.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I will take care that information is duly laid on the Table. [Several hon. Members: "Before Report?"] No, not before Report. I may point out that it does not refer to the actual sum voted, and therefore the details are not in the same position as in an ordinary Estimate which is composed of details. We are voting a lump sum, but full information will be laid on the Table of the House in due course. With regard to what has fallen from the hon. Member, I think he might have spared us his last remarks. [*Cheers.*] I do not know whether it tends to the peace of the world to attribute discourtesy to Ministers of the Crown with respect to a foreign nation. [*Cheers.*] I am quite sure, however, that any misinterpretation of remarks does not tend to the good of his own country. [*Cheers.*] With regard to his particular question I have to say that it is almost absurd to ask whether a military railway, in the first instance made from Sarras to Abu Fatmeh for an expedition for the reconquest of Dongola, pays as a business undertaking. [*Cheers.*] That railway has not been laid for more than six months or so, but I have no doubt, being as it is the only railway past the cataracts of the Nile to Dongola, that traffic will increase in due course, and I believe it will commercially pay in the end. With regard to the proposed railway to Abu Hamed, I have stated to the Committee that the Vote is for material. That includes material for railway construction purposes in this country and also for rolling stock. The Egyptian Government, as I have said, will pay for the construction.

Original Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 169; Noes, 57.—(Division List—No. 19—appended).

AYES.

Allhusen, Augustus Hny. Eden
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon.A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt.Hn. Sir M.H.(Bristol)
Bemrose, Henry Howe
Bethell, Captain
Bhownaggree, M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C. W.(Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon.J.(Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen(Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curzon,Rt.Hn.G.N.(Lanc.S.W.)
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dane, Richard M.
Darling, Charles John
Davenport, W. Bromley-
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis

Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn.G.J.(St.G'rges)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Green,WalfordD.(Wednesbury)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill,Rt.Hn.Lord Arthur(Down)
Hoare, Edw.Brodie(Hampstead)
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Isaacson, Frederick Wootton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kenny, William
Kenrick, William
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Edwin (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Llewelyn,Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'ns'a)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A.R.(Essex)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. CharlesW.(Evesh'm)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
McArthur, William
McCalmont,Maj.-Gen.(Ant'mN)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Monckton, Edward Philip

Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robert Jasper
Murray,Rt.Hn.A.Graham(Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, Thomas
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas.Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Webster,SirR.E.(Isle of Wight)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, John Lloyd
Williams, Joseph Powell (Bir.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Dalziel, James Henry
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh)
Engledow, Charles John
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Flynn, James Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Griffiths, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
Maden, John Henry
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose)
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Pinkerton, John
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Reid, Sir Robert T.
Roberts, John Byrn (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Stanhope, Hon. Phillip J.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Ure, Alexander
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Labouchere and Mr. Dillon.

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1896–7.

INDIAN TROOPS AT SUAKIM.

£145,000, Pay, etc., of Indian Troops at Suakim.

Mr. LOUGH asked whether this Vote covered the whole cost of the troops. He thought that the Indian Government ought not to be put to any expense at the present time.

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said that there were points on which information was desirable. In the past there had constantly been difficulties in settling the accounts as between India and the Home Government. Sometimes the Indian Government had had to wait months and years, and in connection with the Abyssinian campaign the money due from the Imperial Exchequer had to be borrowed. Did this sum of £145,000 represent the general Estimate of the Indian Government? What were the details of the amount, and was it a final discharge, leaving no claims in dispute?

*The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.) said that yesterday he had informed the hon. Gentleman that the estimate of the total extra cost falling upon India through the use of the troops at Suakim had been framed in India, and, in the opinion of the Indian Government, covered every charge. Since yesterday he had received further information. The estimate was divided into seven heads, each of which had been computed by the Indian Government. The heaviest item was £59,000 for the transport of the troops from India and back. There was also £25,000 for land transit, £35,000 for commissariat, and the balance was made up of such items as pay, medical service, and ordnance. Her Majesty's Government had every assurance that the total sum would cover every expense to which the Indian Government had been put.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said that there were many Members who, like him, desired to divide against this Vote as a protest against the employment of Indian troops at all outside India, and more especially in the Soudan, but they were unable to do so because, if the Vote were rejected, the cost would be thrown on the people of India. ["Hear, hear!"] As a matter of fact, however, a considerable burden would have to be borne by India owing to this expedition. It seemed to him a monstrous thing at a time like the present, when the people of India were struggling with famine for their lives, to tax them in order to carry out a ridiculous, absurd, and iniquitous policy of jingoism in Africa. *(Cheers.)* He also thought the Committee should be informed what services the Indian troops had done while at Saukim, and whether India or anybody else had benefited to the extent not of £140,000, but of 140,000 pence by this sending of Indian troops, despite the protest of the Indian Government, to occupy Saukim. [" Hear, hear ! "]

Mr. DILLON said that when this question was discussed last year public opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of the Imperial Government providing the pay of the Indian troops while away from India. He therefore thought that as India was suffering from a terrible famine, the Government ought to depart from the selfish and utterly indefensible principle of refusing to pay the wages of the Indian troops they had brought to Suakim. He regretted the forms of the House did not allow him to move an increase of the Vote by £40,000, or whatever might be the amount of the pay of the troops ; and he thought the Government would do well to put down an Estimate for refunding the money to India as a contribution to the famine fund.

***The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** said he appreciated the spirit of the remarks of the hon. Member for East Mayo ; but they were open to the grave objection that they mixed up two questions that ought to be kept apart. If help from us was required by India, because of the terrific famine, the aid that would be given would be very much larger than £30,000. [" Hear, hear !"] On the other hand, to remit this charge upon India would be to neglect a very important fiscal question of policy between the two countries in regard to the employment of Indian troops in similar cases in the future. [" Hear, hear ! "] While, therefore, he had every desire to consider any application for aid from India—should it be made—he trusted that the suggestion which had been made would not be proceeded with on that occasion.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he thought it was hardly respectful to the Scotch Members that a Bill of this importance should be moved at that hour of the night. He hoped that at some future time they should have some more comprehensive statement than they had at present as to the objects of the Bill. He hoped no one would think that he had any intention of obstructing the Measure, the provisions of which on the whole were extremely beneficial and practical. But the Bill was essentially one of detail, and he hoped at a future time there would be sufficient time to discuss it in Committee. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill whether he was in favour of a proposal which he had upon the Paper, to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee composed of all the Scotch Members, with 15 other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection. He understood that the proposal of the Government was to send this Bill to the Grand Committee on Law, but he thought that proposal was entirely inadequate, and he therefore should propose, after the Second Reading, that the Bill should be referred to such a Committee as he had indicated. He was sure all the Scotch Members would agree with him that they ought to have a Committee of the kind he had mentioned, a Committee which had worked admirably in the past and which would work equally well in the future.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) was satisfied that the Bill could only be passed if it was referred to a Committee upstairs. The Measure had been before the House in many forms and on many occasions. He had sat on many Committees appointed to consider it, and it was his wish it should pass. The prevailing feeling in Scotland was that the Bill should pass, and, therefore, he hoped the Government would refer it to a Select Committee.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN said he considered that he and his Scotch colleagues had some reason to complain of the way in which Scotch business was treated. This was a Bill of 171 clauses, and its Second Reading was moved without any notice to Scotch Members, and in the absence of the Member responsible for Scotch business. Last year the Bill, which was mentioned in the Queen's Speech, was passed in the House of Lords, but the Government made no attempt to pass it here. This year it was not mentioned in the Queen's Speech, but was introduced the first day of the Session. Scotch Members showed their good sense in not making any objection to the introduction of the Bill, but they were reasonable in expecting that at this stage the Lord Advocate would be present to explain shortly and clearly the substantial alterations of the law which the Bill would make. The law relating to public health in Scotland required revision, but at the same time the constituencies were anxious to know at this stage the general lines of the reforms proposed by the Bill. The Measure had only been published within the past week, and he and other Members had had no opportunity of consulting their constituents in regard to it. It would greatly facilitate the progress of business and the understanding of this Bill in the House and the country, if either the First Lord of the Treasury or the Lord Advocate explained the principal points of the Measure, and the way in which the proposals affected the existing law. Certainly, if the Bill was to pass at all, it must be passed by a Committee on which every Scotch Member had the power to sit and give expression to his views. If the First Lord of the Treasury could assure them that the Bill would be sent to a Committee on which all Scotch Members would be represented, adding fifteen, or any other number of Members he might think right and proper to give expression to the views of the House, he thought they might take the Second Reading of the Bill without further discussion. [*Cries of* "No!"]; but in the absence of any explanation by the Minister responsible for Scotch affairs he did not think it right and proper that the Second Reading should be then taken. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) was sure that Members on both sides of the House had echoed the feelings of Scotland generally when they said that the deepest interest was felt in this Bill. He thought that a Minister of the Crown ought to explain the details of this elaborate and minute Bill to the House. The Bill was one which could not be explained on general principles. It was full of details, and in the interest of business and of Scotland generally, he hoped the House would allow the Second Reading to be taken—[*Cries of* "No!"]—on the understanding that the Government would arrange that all Scotch Members should be present at the deliberations of the Committee. He did not desire to intrude himself on that Committee with any Amendments. He did not belong to the Standing Committee on Law, but he had received a number of communications with reference to the Bill which would make it necessary for him, if the Bill was to be referred to that Committee, to button-hole the Members of the Committee, and to impress upon them the views of the Scotch people in regard to this matter. [Hear, hear!"]

MR. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington) said that undoubtedly the Bill was one which required much consideration, and it could only be adequately considered in a Committee composed principally of Scotch Members. They had had no Second Reading explanation of the Bill, and it was not too much to ask the Government to accede to the appeal which had been made by Members on their own side of the House to give a pledge that the Bill should go to a Scotch Committee. Unless that pledge was given the Government could not expect to get the Second Reading of such a Bill without considerable discussion. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, Burghs) thought the Scotch Members had reason to complain of the manner in which the Government were treating this important Bill. The Measure had been discussed throughout the whole of Scotland, and yet there was not a single Minister who would pay the smallest respect to Scotland—[*cheers*]—by giving any explanation of the Bill or any promise to carry out the wishes of the Scotch Members with reference to the one Scotch Bill of the Session. He could not complain of the absence of the Lord Advocate, because this Bill had come on somewhat unexpectedly; but the First Lord of the Treasury was a Scotchman, and a supporter of the Bill, and his name was on the back of it, and he ought not to have left the House when half-a-dozen representative Scotch Members had appealed to the Government to appoint the Committee suggested. That was the way Scotland was treated after a General Election—they would not condescend to say a word in support of their own Bill. [*Cheers.*] At the General Election, they were promised nothing but Scotch legislation–[*laughter*]—and the question in his own county was, how much Scotch legislation the Conservative Party were going to give them at Westminster. Under these circumstances, and having in view the importance of the Bill, he did not think they were asking too much in requesting an explanation of its details, and for a promise that such a Committee as the Scotch Members desired would be appointed.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said that any differences of opinion that existed with regard to the Bill were apparently on mere matters of detail—[*cries of* "No!"]—and he hoped hon. Members would allow the Second Reading to be taken. [*Cries of* "No!"] The composition of the Committee would be considered with every desire to secure a full representation of Scottish opinion.

And it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Mr. R. B. Haldane.

BERRIEW SCHOOL BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 17th March.

SHOP ASSISTANTS (HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

On the Motion "That this House do now adjourn,"

MR. LOUGH said it was announced in the House last night that Monday would be devoted to getting Mr. Speaker out of the Chair, but just now the First Lord said they would take the Military Bands Bill on Monday. He would like to know whether, if they did not come to the Military Bands Bill on Monday it would be taken on Thursday before the Education Bill.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston) said that the first Order on Monday would be the Army Estimates, with the Speaker in the Chair. There were certain Bills put down in the ordinary way to follow them, but he did not suppose they would be reached.

House adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 8th February 1897.

INDIAN FAMINE.

*LORD KINNAIRD asked the following questions, of which he had given private notice to the Government: 1st. Whether Her Majesty's Government were in a position to affirm or contradict the statement telegraphed on the 2nd inst. by Reuter's agent from Raipur, in the Central Provinces, that many deaths from starvation had already taken place, that many persons were on the brink of starvation, and that the district, with a population of one and a-half millions, was almost without food supplies? 2nd. In the worst districts of each of the affected provinces, what was now the selling price of grain in common use, (a) in the towns, (b) in the remote interior? 3rd. What did Her Majesty's Government consider to be the retail selling price of such grain which could not be passed without the speedy exhaustion of the cultivation and artisan classes, by which is meant classes above the unskilled wage-earning labourer? He said that the statement of the Secretary of State in another place on Friday last reminded the country of an awful possibility. If the loss of life was estimated at 5,800,000 in 1877-8, out of a population of 27,000,000, what was the possibility of this famine, affecting an area with a population of 40,000,000? If the same ratio of lives were lost the number would reach the appalling total of over eight millions. He had carefully read over the Government's answer to the questions he addressed to them last Monday, and he considered they wholly failed to answer the facts and figures which he ventured to put forward, as he believed, making out a case that the time had arrived when they must on a large scale store grain, and, if necessary, import it from Burma and elsewhere. They were not working in the dark, without precedent to guide them. Of the principal famines of this century only one was successfully grappled with, and that was by Lord Northbrook and Sir Richard Temple, and the other officers working under them, and they were only able to avert horrible destruction of human life by a large importation of grain. The crux of the whole matter was, would private trade do what was necessary? Would it supply grain to even get-at-able districts at a possible price? This necessary help must, as the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal had said, come by grain imported from across the sea. The optimistic prophecies and promises of the Government that they would prevent loss of life had already been falsified. He believed it was now admitted that the situation in the Central Provinces was serious. Reuter's Agency telegraphed the serious news that an area of 12,000 miles and a population of 1,500,000 people was almost without food supply. He was introduced to a gentleman that day who had been 38 years in India, 32 of which were spent in the Government service. He left Bombay on December 14, and he admitted that planters, merchants, importers and others who knew the country well, estimated that up to November 14 there had been 250,000 deaths from practically starvation throughout the famine area. In the Central Provinces there was another burning question, the supply of seed grain, which neither landlords nor tenants were able to get. Did the Government intend to provide seed for the next harvest under the Famine Code? Papers dated January 13 from Calcutta gave an account of a meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. The Committee of that body said:—

> "Having regard to the widespread effect of the present scarcity, the Committee have been impressed by the high range of prices throughout the Province of Bengal. Even in places where the crop has not wholly failed, prices of food stuffs are far in excess of anything marking the beginning of scarcity in 1874 or in 1866. This high range of wholesale prices means a very considerably higher retail price to the people, so that the effect of the demand for food in the afflicted tracts, and in the tracts where the crops have notoriously failed, has led the Committee to infer that stocks throughout the country are low."

The British Indian Association, which always spoke with authority, had also expressed dissatisfaction that steps had not been taken to secure an adequate store of grain which could be utilised at short notice. This, they believed, could only be done by the Government, so that, in the event of a crisis, it might be used in outlying districts. With reference to questions 2 and 3, he ventured to think an assurance was required from the Government that, whenever the rate rose to 18lbs. per rupee, direct orders should be given that imported grain would be brought into the district; for it was an established fact in famine history, that it was impossible for the rate to be 18lbs. per rupee of grain in common use for long without the death of millions, as in Orissa and Southern India. Private trade was sure to be busy about and in seaports and the main lines of railway, and might possibly do all that was wanted there. It did so in Behar, sending in to the distressed parts 50,000 tons a month. This fact showed how futile all the assertions were that the Government by their importing largely—altogether about 500,000 tons—crushed out of activity private trade. It imported again in Southern India, when it threw into the distressed parts of Madras and Bombay 100,000 tons a month; but that grain never got into the remote parts. The prices prevailing along the line of rail were high enough to enable traders to make a profit, and all they could bring was greedily absorbed on the main line. Traders, therefore, had no mind to face the difficulties and risks of the further journey into the remote parts. This was no conjecture, for he had seen private letters from the Central Provinces which arrived last week, speaking of terrible scenes and deaths from starvation. He had received a letter speaking of a district some miles from a town or railway, in which the distress was very acute throughout the villages. At present there were no relief works in those villages, and no possibility of getting Government assistance. The action of the Government in discouraging private charity had made it difficult to collect funds, and the Mansion House Fund was entirely, it was believed, in the hands of the Government for disposal. The difficulty was that the Government either had no information or thought it well to follow the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, that the Indian Government should have a free hand and not be interfered with or troubled with questions. He was not making any complaints against any officials, who were doing most self-denying hard work and using every endeavour to save life. He only hoped that many would not give way under the strain, as one noble worker had done—a Deputy-Commissioner who died of brain fever from the strain put on him by the famine, constantly saying, "These people are dying, and I cannot save them." What the country would require of the Government was, not assurances and promises, but facts justifying the statements put forward, that the Government of India was never in so favourable a position for combating famine. Many high authorities took the opposite view, for prices had been for some years at an exhausting figure, and now the scarcity and increased dearness were more widespread than ever had been the case before. Stocks were not coming forward as expected, and the landlords and people with wealth were clinging to their supplies.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (the EARL of ONSLOW): The noble Lord has not confined himself to asking questions, but has given your Lordships a certain amount of information and has passed some criticism on the action of the Viceroy and his Government, and perhaps your Lordships will forgive me if, before I address myself to answering the questions of the noble Lord, I deal for a moment with what he has said. In the first place, I am not aware that the Government of Lord Elgin has at any time made any promise or statement that the Government would be able to prevent entirely loss of life. I think the statement made was that the Government had recognised that it should be in such a position that no persons need of necessity lose their lives; and I would point out that there is a considerable difference between the two propositions. The noble Lord has said that he has been informed that in one particular district there have been 250,000 deaths from famine. I am not in a position to contradict the assertion made by the noble Lord, but I can say this—that if it should hereafter prove to be corroborated and shown to be correct, I should be very much surprised, because it is quite in opposition to all the information we have received; and when the noble Lord asks me whether Her Majesty's Government can affirm or contradict what has been reported by Reuter's agent at Raipur, I can only assure him that it is quite contrary to the information we have received. I am not myself in a position to say what the number of deaths at Raipur may have been, but the Secretary of State has communicated with the Government of India by telegraph, and I shall be glad to hand to my noble Friend a copy of the reply as soon as it is received. The noble Lord has asked me a number of other questions, some of which it is not easy to answer in a general way. The noble Lord asks me what Her Majesty's Government consider to be the retail selling price of grain which cannot be passed without the speedy exhaustion of the cultivator and artisan classes, by which is meant classes above the unskilled wage-earning labourer. If the noble Lord will refer to the Report of the Famine Commissioners he will see that the actual price of grain in a particular district is not really controlled by the necessities of the population or the power of the population to purchase. The Commissioners say that it is a well-ascertained fact that prices which will be regarded as indicating a state of famine in one part of the country are quite compatible with a state of undisturbed prosperity in another. As to what are the prices now obtaining in different parts of India, I can only answer that by referring to the prices in the particular district to which the noble Lord has referred. On December 31, 1896, rice and wheat were obtainable in Raipur at the rate of 10 seers per rupee, while on the same date in 1895, before famine prices existed, rice was obtainable at the rate of 16 seers per rupee, and wheat at the rate of 16½ seers per rupee; so that the noble Lord will see that the price has risen from 16 seers to the rupee to 10. Before I sit down I should like to read part of a telegram received from the Viceroy to-day, which, I think, will go a long way to allay the apprehensions of the noble Lord as to the supplies being insufficient for the wants of India to-day. The Viceroy says:—

> "Our latest information is generally reassuring. Steady prices generally, and fall which has now begun in Punjab and N.W. Provinces, and sufficiency of visible supplies for daily requirements, are favourable indications. Punjab prices reported 15 to 20 per cent. lower than two months ago. Apprehension of failure of stocks would be indicated by rise of prices. Spring crops promise well in Northern India and Hindustan, and ought to add considerably to existing stocks. Sufficiency of existing stocks for all probable emergencies not capable of precise quantitative answer, but no reason to doubt correctness of policy affirmed in your dispatch No. 10 of Jan. 15, that trade as a whole can supply food demand better and more effectively than Government."

I think that in that answer I shall have given the noble Lord some assurance that the Government of India are satisfied that the policy they have adopted and intend to carry out is one which will meet the necessities of the situation.

House Adjourned at a Quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a Quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 8th February 1897.

QUESTIONS.

FOREIGN-MADE PRISON GOODS.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he proposes to introduce the Bill for the exclusion of the goods made in the prisons of other countries promised in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and if he will take care to press it forward sufficiently early in the Session to avoid its being subsequently shelved for want of time?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am not able at present to state when I shall introduce the Bill, but I hope it will not be long delayed.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Will my right hon. Friend make it as soon as possible?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, I hope it will not be long delayed.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK. ACCOUNTS.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state how many accounts in the

Post Office Savings Bank showed, on the 31st December 1895, a balance not exceeding £50, in how many accounts the balance was over £50 and not exceeding £100, and in how many over £100?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. R. W. HANBURY, Preston): The number of accounts in the Post Office Savings Bank on December 31st, 1895, with balances not exceeding £50 was 5,858,191; with balances over £50 but not exceeding £100, 346,463; and with balances over £100, 248,943.

POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH SERVICES (REVENUE).

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will state how much of the net revenue of £3,632,122 derived from the combined Postal and Telegraph services for the year 1895–6 was contributed by England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively?

MR. HANBURY: The amount named by the hon. Member is not net revenue, as it includes work done for Government departments, in respect of which no money is received. I do not know what he means by the phrase "contributed." All that is known is the amount "collected" in any country and the amount "expended" in such country, but the amount collected does not bear any necessary proportion to the amount actually expended. For instance, 2½d. collected for a foreign letter may represent at least 3d. expended whereas 1d. collected for an inland letter may represent much less than 1d. expended in respect thereof by the Post Office. Similarly the amounts expended in any country by the Post Office do not accurately represent the cost incurred in respect of that country. The cost of the Irish packet service for instance is all paid in London. The accounts of money collected and expended in England (including Wales) Scotland and Ireland are to be found on pp. 12 and 34 of Parliamentary Paper 336 of 1896.

IMPORTATION OF SPIRITS (SIERRA LEONE).

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can see his way to take any action to put a stop to the importation of the inferior spirit at Sierra Leone, complained of by the Acting Colonial Secretary in Colonial Report No. 160, Sierra Leone, issued in 1896, and described in page 3 as producing terrible effects upon consumers who are our collectors and growers of our produce for export, and being such as is commonly used by painters as driers in lieu of turpentine?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.), replying in the absence of Mr. Chamberlain: I hope to be very shortly in a position to lay before the House all the papers relating to the general question of the Liquor Traffic in West Africa.

FINNER RIFLE RANGE (COUNTY DONEGAL).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that on the piece of land recently taken by the War Office for the construction of a rifle range at Finner, county Donegal, a cairn of great antiquity, which is held in great veneration by the people of the district, and is believed to contain the ashes of some Irish chiefs, is being demolished and the material used in the construction of the range; and, whether, as this cairn stands on the highest part of the lands and would not in any way interfere with its use, and as the necessary material can be got elsewhere in the neighbourhood, he will instruct the military authorities to stop further demolition of the cairn?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): A report has now been received from Finner, and it appears that there is no cairn at all on the range, but a natural limestone formation from which some twelve cubic yards of loose stones were taken. It is added that there is in the neighbourhood a small cromlech known as Muldoon's grave which is an object of local veneration. This is 100 yards from the supposed cairn, and has not been touched.

ST. HELENA.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, why the high rate of postage of 6d. per letter at St. Helena is maintained instead of 2½d. as in all other of our Colonial possessions; and whether in view of the great poverty of the population generally, the recommendation of the Acting Governor in the matter of this excess of postal charge will be accepted, as pointed out in page 5, Colonial Report, No. 176, St. Helena, for 1895, issued last year?

MR. HANBURY: My hon. and gallant Friend is advocating a reform which was carried into effect several months ago. On the 1st of October last the postage on letters from St. Helena was reduced from 6d. to 2½d. per half ounce.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to Colonial Report, No. 176, St. Helena, for 1895, issued last year, where, at page 6, the Acting Governor calls attention to the fact of the growing increase of the female population over the male owing to the emigration of the young men to Cape Colony, and points out the desire of many young women to proceed to the Cape as domestic servants; and whether under the circumstances, he can suggest to the High Commissioner at the Cape to endeavour to arrange with the Cape Government to offer assisted passages from St. Helena to respectable girls to enable them to proceed to Cape Colony where the males are in excess of the females?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am in communication with the Agent General for the Cape Colony on this subject, and shall be glad if it is possible to make some arrangement such as is suggested by the hon. and gallant Member.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Committees consisting of ex-officio and elected guardians were appointed in the Poor Law Unions of Mallow, Fermoy, and Mitchelstown for the purpose of endeavouring to bring about settlements between evicted tenants and landlords in these unions under sections 46 and 47 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896; and if he will ascertain from the clerks of those several unions how many evicted tenants have been reinstated in their holdings through the efforts of these Committees, and how many landlords have either declined their mediation or failed to reply to the invitation extended to them by these Conciliation Committees?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Committees to which the hon. Member refers in the Question were not created under the authority of any provision contained in the Act of last year, and though I believe it is true that Committees were formed in certain localities for the purpose indicated, I have no effective means at my disposal of obtaining official information as to the proceedings of such bodies as is suggested in the Question. There have been no settlements effected with evicted tenants under the Act in either of the Poor Law Unions mentioned.

MR. JOHN DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked whether, in view of total failure of this Clause to effect the object which Parliament had in view, he would introduce any fresh legislation this Session?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, I cannot undertake to introduce any fresh legislation this Session. I think we ought at all events to wait until the time when that particular provision expires before deciding whether any further legislation is necessary.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was not aware that the clerks of the unions were also secretaries of the Committees, and that therefore there would be no difficulty in getting the information he sought.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman if he had considered the desirability of obtaining arbitration Courts with compulsory powers for dealing with these cases.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think that would be desirable.

SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS (SCOTLAND.)

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the fact that in the schools in Welsh-speaking districts in Wales text books in Welsh and English are used, the Scottish Education Department will consider the advisability of adopting text books in English and Gaelic in the schools of Gaelic-speaking districts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland?

*__The LORD ADVOCATE__ (Mr. Graham Murray, Buteshire): The adoption of text books does not rest with the Education Department, but primarily with the managers of schools. Should the use of such books as the hon. Member refers to be proposed by the managers of any schools, the Department would consider whether it would be expedient to sanction them.

Mr. WEIR asked if the hon. and learned Member was aware that these text books were only allowed to pupil teachers in Gaelic schools in the Highlands whereas in Wales the scholars had these books.

*__The LORD ADVOCATE__ said he had nothing to add to the answer he had already given.

Mr. WEIR said he would put another question on the subject.

NORTH SEA CONVENTION.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Atlantic seaboard of the Island of Lewis is included in the North Sea Convention?

The LORD ADVOCATE: No, Sir.

Captain SINCLAIR (Forfar): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps to ascertain the views of the Foreign Powers, who are signatories of the North Sea Convention, in regard to an agreement as to the extension of the trawling limit upon the east coast of Scotland?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS, (Mr. G. Curzon, Lancashire, Southport): The matter referred to is engaging the earnest attention of Her Majesty's Government; but until a decision has been arrived at on the whole question, which involves points of great difficulty, no case arises for addressing a communication to any Foreign Government.

VACCINATION LAWS.

General RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is the intention of the Government to take any action with reference to the Vaccination Laws this Session?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I have carefully considered this question since the Royal Commission reported in September last. The Royal Commission recommended that, amongst other things, a further investigation should be made into the effect of the storage of vaccine lymph in glycerine. I took an early opportunity of instructing Dr. Thorne, the medical officer of the Board, and Dr. Copeman to visit certain foreign cities in order to study and report on the more modern methods adopted abroad as to the preparation, storage, and distribution of glycerinised calf lymph, and to ascertain the results. These officers have visited Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Dresden, and Cologne for the purpose, but their inquiry is not yet completed, and their report, therefore, has not yet been submitted to me. I may say this, however, that on the information before me I have already come to this conclusion—that any alteration of the law will most certainly involve an important and radical change in the matter of lymph supply, and will necessitate consequently a very considerable modification in the system of public vaccination. The hon. Member will see that no time has been lost by the Local Government Board since the report of the Royal Commission was published, and I am quite alive to the importance of this question.

MALL (CONDITION OF ROAD).

Mr. C. J. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been called to the state of the road between Marlborough House and Buckingham Palace; whether immediate steps will be taken to repair the same: and, whether he has considered the desirability of continuing the wood pavement between Marlborough House and Buckingham Gate?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): I am aware that this road is not at present in good condition. It has been the custom to repair it twice a year (April and September) but the traffic has been growing so considerably, that it will be necessary to mend the road at shorter intervals in future. I propose to have the work done now as soon as possible. I am now considering the question of laying down wood paving on this portion of the roadway.

DISTRESS (LISTOWEL UNION).

Mr. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received a resolution from the Listowel Board of Guardians, directing attention to the distress existing among the labouring classes in several parts of the Union, owing to the want of employment and the almost total failure of the potato crop; and, whether, in view of this state of affairs, the Government will see the necessity that exists of opening relief works in the district mentioned?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have received a copy of the resolution referred to. Careful inquiries which have been made as to the condition of the poorer classes in the Listowel Union do not point to the conclusion that it will become necessary to supplement the resources of the poor law by the opening of relief works.

MILITARY WORKS BILL.

Mr. MONK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will explain to the House the principle upon which grants will be made towards acquiring new rifle ranges out of the £500,000 to be devoted to that purpose; and, by whom applications for grants should be made to the War Office?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): There is no intention of making any grants out of this fund. Its object is the purchase in the several districts of ranges at which the regular troops and the Militia can safely practice with the Lee-Metford rifle. Where ranges so acquired are conveniently situated for use by Volunteers, every facility for shooting on the usual conditions will be given to them.

In answer to Mr. Monk,

Mr. BRODRICK said he could not say anything as to the locality in which ranges would be purchased.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Paper giving the details of the proposed expenditure for defence works and ranges provided in the Military Works (Money) Bill, giving similar particulars to those which had been provided with regard to barracks, before proceeding with the Second Reading of the Bill; and, whether, if he will not furnish Papers, he will now say at what precise places the proposed expenditure on the fortification of London is to be made, and what is the exact nature of the works to be undertaken?

Mr. BRODRICK: It would not be for the public interest that details of the intended defence works should be given. The Government propose to follow the course adopted with the consent of Parliament in 1888 and only to show the amount to be expended in the schedule to the Bill. The general character of the proposed works was explained in introducing the resolution. As regards ranges, the list of stations at which they are to be provided could not be given without largely increasing the cost. In reference to the allusion in the question to the "fortification of London," I would explain to the hon. Member that the works proposed are merely a continuation of those which have been for some years in progress—viz., the preparation of centres for a system of field defences which could be thrown up on emergency. They include, as has already been stated, storehouses for the tools and ammunition necessary for the troops to be stationed at these points.

BARRACKS ACT 1890.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will furnish to the House additional particulars showing how much has been expended under the Barracks Act 1890, setting out the structures that have been completed, and giving in each case an estimate of the cost which it will be necessary to incur to complete the works under the new Bill before the House?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I shall be glad to give a Return showing by stations the expenditure to the end of 1896 under the Barracks Act of 1890, if the hon. Member thinks right to move it. All structures commenced under the loan of 1890 will be completed under it; but any additional buildings required to complete the schemes will be provided under the new Bill.

Mr. LOUGH asked if the hon. Gentleman could state whether, before the Bill was proceeded with, another account of the expenditure under the Barracks Act of 1890 would be furnished, because the one that is in existence is very old?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: That looks very much like a question of which I had better have notice.

Mr. VESEY KNOX (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why no provision is made either in the Military Works Act or in the Estimates for the contemplated barracks at Londonderry; and, what is the cause of the delay in commencing work?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Provision for the barracks at Londonderry is made in the Barracks Act of 1890, under which the works will be completed. The delay which has arisen is in consequence of the great difficulty experienced in obtaining possession of a large portion of the ground on which the new buildings are to be erected. Steps are being taken to fix a value of this ground by arbitration under the Lands Clauses Act.

Mr. J. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked would the hon. Gentleman take care before the work commenced that the stone for the building should be obtained from the Donegal quarries.

[No answer was given.]

NORTHAMPTON PRISON (ADVERTISEMENTS).

Mr. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the advertisements inviting tenders for supplying with goods the prison at Northampton are inserted in London and Birmingham newspapers but not in the newspapers published at Northampton; would he explain what is the reason for this; and whether he will see that these advertisements are henceforward published in the local journals?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir Matthew White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool): The advertisements are not, as the hon. Member's Question suggests, for Northampton prison alone, but for the whole of the prisons of England and Wales; and being lengthy and expensive, are for economy's sake inserted only in trade journals of general circulation, and in the newspapers which have the widest circulation in the various parts of the country. I shall be glad to consider the claim of any Northampton journal to belong to either of these classes of papers.

IRISH MAILS.

Mr. JAMES ROCHE (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if, having regard to the resolutions passed by various public bodies in Killarney and Tralee, copies of which have reached him, calling the attention of the Postmaster General to the very irregular manner in which the mails have been delivered in those towns for the last few years, he will communicate with the Great South Western Railway Company and endeavour to get the mails forwarded from Mallow Junction to Killarney and Tralee in a more expeditious manner than at present?

Mr. HANBURY: The resolutions referred to will receive consideration. There are, however, grave objections to increasing the number of stops of the Dublin and Cork day mail trains, which would of course unfavourably affect the arrival and departure of the mail at Cork. Even if the Dublin and Cork trains stop at Mallow, it is not clear that the Company would desire to put on trains to and from Tralee in connection therewith for their ordinary traffic, and the Post Office would not be justified in paying for special trains for the service.

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any arrangements have yet been made with the Irish Railway Companies, so as to enable him to give the new mail time table to Cork and Belfast respectively?

MR. HANBURY: The revision of the hours of the day mail trains from Dublin to Cork, Belfast, etc., was necessarily postponed till the time table between London and Dublin was definitely settled. It is now under consideration, but it has not been possible in the short time which has elapsed to make any definite arrangement.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask whether, in making these arrangements, will due consideration be paid to the resolution recently forwarded to the Postmaster General by the Cork Chamber of Commerce and Shipping, directing attention to the needless delays that now occur on the loop line in Dublin and in backing in and out of Kingsbridge station?

MR. HANBURY: I have not seen it, but I have no doubt due attention will be given to it.

MR. KNOX: May I ask whether, in preparing this time table, the right hon. Gentleman will take the opportunity of laying it before the representatives of the Cork, Derry, and Belfast Chambers of Commerce.

MR. HANBURY: I do not quite know why these towns should be singled out in this Question, which affects the whole of Ireland.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND).

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how much, out of the sum allocated last year for the building of light railways in Ireland, has been spent up to the present?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No portion of the money referred to has yet been spent, but negotiations in connection with a variety of schemes are now in progress.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Cavan W. (Mr. J. P. FARRELL), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the findings of the Royal Commision on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, he will, with a view to giving some relief to the people during this hard season, advise the Government to introduce an Agricultural Land Rating Bill for Ireland?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have already stated that it is not the intention of the Government to introduce an Agricultural Land Rating Bill for Ireland.

ARABI PASHA.

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs under what sentence, English or Egyptian, is Arabi Pasha still condemned to exile from his country; and whether, in view of the peaceful condition of Egypt at the present time, Her Majesty's Government can see their way to abridge the term of his banishment, and permit him to return to his home and his friends?

MR. CURZON: Arabi Pasha was tried by an Egyptian court-martial on December 3rd, 1882, on a charge of rebellion against the Khedive. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to death, but the Khedive, by a decree of the same date, commuted this sentence to perpetual exile on condition that he should proceed to any locality that might be indicated to him, and that he should there remain unless authorised to remove. The question of allowing him to return to Egypt was raised in March, 1893, when Mr. Gladstone, in reply to a question, stated that inquiry had been made in 1891 into the health of the exiles, with the result that, on that ground there was no reason for Arabi's removal; whilst on any other grounds Her Majesty's Government did not feel themselves justified in overriding the decision of the Egyptian Government. Nothing has since occurred to warrant a reversal of that decision.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): May I ask, is it intended to keep him there perpetually?

[No answer was given.]

EXPLOSION OF CORDITE (WOOLWICH ARSENAL).

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War who is responsible for such dangerous experiments as the explosion of large quantities of cordite at Woolwich that took place there and was recorded in Tuesday's papers; and what compensation will be granted for the serious damage caused?

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS: As I explained the other day, these experiments were undertaken for a specific purpose under the supervision of the Ordnance Department, and a site was selected at Plumstead where no risk was likely to occur, and where proper precautions are taken. No complaints have been received at the War Office, and the reports as to the extent of damage done appear to have been very much exaggerated.

SALE OF FIRE-ARMS AND SPIRITS IN NEW HEBRIDES.

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether French traders are permitted to sell firearms and spirits to the Natives of the New Hebrides, whereas British traders are expressly prohibited from doing so; (2) whether the joint agreements entered into between the British and French Governments in 1887 and 1888, in relation to the New Hebrides, contain any clause sanctioning this state of things; and (3) whether any remonstrances have been addressed to the French Government on the subject?

MR. CURZON: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The joint agreement contains no provision affecting the traffic in arms and liquor, which is prohibited to British subjects by Regulation under Order in Council. Representations on the subject have recently been addressed to the French Government. No reply having been received from them, instructions are being sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris to again draw their attention to the matter.

SETTLED PROPERTY (ESTATE DUTY).

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any test case, raising the points referred to in the questions put to him in this House on 3rd July last as to the proper interpretation of Section 2, Sub-Section (1) (b) of the Finance Act, 1894, has yet been decided or is ripe for hearing; and, if not, can he hold out any hope of obtaining the decision of the Courts of Law within a reasonable time?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: No case has yet arisen in which it has been found possible to raise before a Court of Law the points referred to in the question addressed to me by the hon. Member in July last. Special instructions have been given to the authorities of the Inland Revenue to watch every case and to arrange at the earliest possible moment to obtain a legal decision upon the points in question, and I will take care that the hon. Member is informed of any cases in which it may seem probable that the questions can be raised.

CHILDREN'S METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can inform the House how many of the Metropolitan Poor Law children will probably come under the jurisdiction of the proposed new Asylums Board for Sick Children, and what number of children suffering from ophthalmia, contagious diseases of the skin or scalp, debility, defective intellect, or other physical infirmity, are respectively likely to require the services of the Board?

Mr. CHAPLIN: According to Returns received from the several district and separate schools, including the large Roman Catholic certified schools, the cases of ophthalmia number 760, and, if the number of children in the workhouses and infirmaries is added, the number for which separate treatment is desirable may be roughly estimated at 1,000. The number of children in the schools referred to who are returned as suffering from ringworm is 208, and of those suffering from skin disease 168. If the number in the workhouses and infirmaries is added, the total number of these children may be estimated at about 500. I have no information as to the number of children requiring special treatment during convalescence, or seaside air, or of children who, in consequence of defect of intellect or physical infirmity, cannot properly be trained in association with children in ordinary schools; but the number of the latter class I should not anticipate would be large.

LONDONDERRY CORPORATION STOCK.

Mr. KNOX: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland (1) whether the forms prescribed by the regulations as to issue of stock in Ireland, under the Public Health Act Amendment Act 1890, contemplate the issue of stock only after public tender, to be invited after the resolution for its creation has been passed; (2) whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Londonderry Corporation, nevertheless, have resolved to issue stock to the amount of £80,000 without public tender at par, and have refused to consider an offer of 101 per cent. made for the stock by a responsible person, on the ground that the Corporation was bound by a contract alleged to have been entered into not under seal, in respect of a smaller total amount, and before the consent order had been issued by the Local Government Board; (3) whether the Local Government Board were aware of this alleged contract when they issued their consent order on 27th January; and (4) whether the Board have any power to prevent such a transaction; and, if not, whether the regulations will be revised so as to prevent it being repeated?

*The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. J. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The forms and regulation framed under the Statute mentioned resembling in this respect those framed by the Local Government Board in England, do not prescribe any mode in which applications for stock are to be invited, that being left to the local authorities to determine. I am not aware whether the facts are exactly as stated in the second paragraph, as some difference of opinion appears to exist between the members of the Corporation as to what was the precise nature and effect of the negotiations on the subject. The answer to the third paragraph is in the negative. As to the fourth paragraph, the Local Government Board have no power to interfere with the action of the local authority, in respect of the issue of stock after a consent order has been made, and inasmuch as the regulations are similar to those prescribed in England and have been found on the whole to work satisfactorily, it is not considered desirable to alter them.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RATING).

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what is the sum total of rates paid in respect of Elementary Schools other than Board Schools, distinguishing counties and boroughs, in the last year for which such returns are available?

Mr. CHAPLIN: The Local Government Board have no returns which would enable them to furnish the information referred to.

Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH asked if the right hon. Gentleman could say from which department he could get the return?

Mr. CHAPLIN could not say without notice.

INCOME TAX ON UNPAID DIVIDENDS.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the case, W 1 a 546, before the Inland Revenue, in which that Department claimed Income Tax on a mortgage although no income had been received from the mortgage or rent from the property for four years, and stated in their letter of the 31st December 1896, though they subsequently waived their claim in this particular case, that "the Special Commissioners must regard the full amount of the mortgage interest annually accruing (whether it is actually realised by year or not) as representing the income from this source for the purpose of the Income Tax Acts. Whether this claim for Income Tax on incomes nominally accruing, but not paid has his sanction; and, whether it is enforced on unpaid dividends or interest on debentures and other classes of property; and, if so, under what clauses of the Income Tax Acts it is based?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: My hon. Friend seems to be under a misapprehension as to the point involved in this case. The Inland Revenue do not claim Income Tax from a mortgagee in respect of interest which he does not receive. A mortgagee pays his Income Tax indirectly, that is, by the deduction of the amount of it from the mortgage interest, when paid over by the mortgagor. Where, therefore, no interest is paid, there is no deduction. But, in considering a claim for exemption or abatement, the Inland Revenue insist that mortgage interest due to a person making the claim should be taken into account in computing his total income, even if it has not been paid within the year, unless it can be clearly shown that such interest is irrecoverable, is, in fact, a bad debt. This was the case in the present instance. As soon as the Inland Revenue were satisfied that the interest was irrecoverable they abandoned the claim that it should be taken into account. The same principle applies generally in the case of claims to exemption or abatement, to dividends, and any interest accruing within the year. Such interest is included in the statement of the claimant's income, unless it can be shown that it is not only in arrear but irrecoverable.

MR. BARTLEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that in this particular case the Inland Revenue knew that no rents had been received for four years, and was that not sufficient evidence to show that practically the matter was a bad debt?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER presumed they had heard that.

MR. BARTLEY said the claim was made after they knew that.

PARISH DOCUMENTS.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the doubt existing as to the interpretation of Clause 16, Section 8, in the Local Government Act of 1894, which deals with the custody of parish documents; whether he will state whether a tithe-map would according to that section, be a document directed by law to be kept with the public books, writings, and papers of the parish; and, whether the Local Government Board have given any legal opinion to parish councils upon the question referred to?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am aware that questions have arisen with regard to the custody of documents under Subsection (8) of Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1894. The Act contemplated that this would be the case, and has provided that any questions as to such custody shall be determined by the County Council. The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction to determine questions as regards the tithe-map, and it has been their practice to inform parish councils to this effect. I am advised that tithe-maps are under the Tithe Commutation Act 1886, to be kept "with the public books, writings, and papers of the parish," and the subsection to which I have referred requires therefore, that they shall either remain in their existing custody or be deposited in such custody as the parish council may direct.

POOR LAW SCHOOLS (METROPOLIS).

MR. E. H. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the evidence of Dr. Downes, given before the recent Committee on Poor Law Schools, that there are in London workhouses on an average upwards of 2,000 children of school age; and, whether, as it is stated that this aggregation of children in workhouses is largely due to the block caused by the existence of infectious disease either among the children in the workhouse or in the school belonging to the union, he will entrust the new Central Metropolitan Authority, which he proposes to create, with the duty of taking over existing probationary or quarantine wards, and when necessary erecting others, in accordance with the recommendation of the recent Committee?

MR. CHAPLIN: I am glad to say that the number of children who are detained in London workhouses and infirmaries is now less than the number stated. The block has to some extent been occasioned by the cause referred to by the hon. Member, and it will be the duty of the Central Authority whom it is proposed to constitute to make such provision as is necessary for children of the class alluded to. The question how such provision should be made will be one for the new body in the first instance to consider.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he will give effect to the recommendation of the recent Committee on Metropolitan Poor Law Schools that the establishment of small certified homes should be encouraged, by the Local Government Board urging on boards of guardians in suitable cases the expediency of utilising such homes, and by the appointment of additional inspectors, preferably women, to be charged with the duty of regularly visiting certified homes, conferring with the committee of management, and inspecting the children individually?

Mr. PICKERSGILL also asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to take any, and, if so, what steps to carry out the recommendation of the recent Committee on Poor Law Schools that special schools should be provided, of an intermediate character, for the reception of the casual and fluctuating class of children known as ins and outs.

Mr. CHAPLIN: It has already been the practice of the Local Government Board in the past to encourage the establishment of small certified schools, and it is certainly my intention to continue to do so. These schools are inspected by inspectors of the Board, and I have under my consideration the question whether it will not be necessary to increase the number of inspectors for the metropolitan district. The Local Government Board consider that it is very desirable that provision should be made otherwise than in the workhouse for children who are now retained temporarily before being drafted into the school, in order that it may be ascertained that they are not suffering from infectious disease, and for children of the particular class referred to by the hon. Member. The Board are desirous of promoting such arrangements, and schemes for the purpose are now under the consideration of some of the boards of guardians. The Board consider that such provision could be more satisfactorily made by the guardians of the different unions than by a central authority acting for the whole of the metropolis.

ARMY RETIRED PAY.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he has any objection to state the principle on which the "just equivalent" mentioned in Article 978 XIII. of the Royal Warrant of 10th June 1884, was calculated; and, whether and when any, and, if so, what, limit was placed upon such equivalent by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The principle adopted has been to give the officer the calculated value of his prospects at the time of retirement under the Warrant or Warrants in force before 1881, subject to a limit of £600 a year, which was the highest amount of retired full pay granted under former Warrants to a Colonel. This principle was decided on with the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether this limit was made known to the officers who were to retire under the article in question?

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS said he was informed that it was so made known.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS (IRELAND).

Mr. DAVITT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the Resolution unanimously adopted by the House of Commons on 13th April 1894, and supported by all sections of Irish Members, favouring the extension to Ireland of all the legal facilities existing in England for the creation of labourers' allotments or small holdings of land, he will introduce a measure to that effect during the present Session, and thereby encourage the fuller and better cultivation of the soil in Ireland, and increase in this manner opportunities of profitable employment for the industrial population of that country?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The terms of the Resolution in question were "that all the facilities for obtaining land now possessed by England should be at once extended to Ireland." The object aimed at by the hon. Member is to some extent met by the Labourers Acts of 1883 to 1896, which do not apply to England. The condition of affairs in Ireland, which is already a country of small holdings, is materially different from that in England, and I am not prepared to affirm, even apart from the question of machinery, that the same arrangements should be made to apply to both countries. I do not say that the subject in its more general aspect is not worthy of consideration, but the Government in any case cannot undertake to introduce legislation dealing with it in the present Session.

Mr. DAVITT: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the probability that such a Measure would pass without opposition, he will not reconsider his decision?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am unable to take the same view as the hon. Gentleman as to the probability of a Measure of this kind being entirely unopposed; and I could give no pledge in the direction indicated without a further assurance on the point, and without giving the subject a great deal of further consideration.

MORTALITY (CENTRAL INDIA PROVINCES).

Mr. DAVITT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state from the statistics of the *Local Government Gazette* of the Central Provinces of India the death rate in those provinces for the six months of the year ending 31st December 1895, and for the year ending 31st December 1896, and the total number of deaths in each of these two periods, giving each number separately?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing): The *Central Provinces Gazette* does not give the full monthly vital statistics for any month later than September 1896, but the figures for the periods of three months ending September 1895, and September 1896, respectively are as follows:—Mean of monthly death rates, July to September 1895, 43·12 per mille: mean of monthly death rates, July to September 1896, 55·80 per mille; total number of deaths, July to September 1895, 102,420; total number of deaths, July to September 1896, 132,552. These provinces were visited by a severe epidemic of cholera in the spring and summer which caused a heavy and general rise in the number of deaths in the summer and early autumn. Though I have no complete summary of the death rate of the whole province for the later months, the Chief Commissioner informed me some time back that in the division of Jubbalpore, where the distress was acute, there was a continuous fall in the mortality during October and November.

WORKMISTRESSES (IRISH SCHOOLS).

Mr. D. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if, during the recess, he brought before the Irish Government or the Commissioners of National Education the claims of workmistresses in Irish schools for increased remuneration; and (2) whether, seeing that these workmistresses give constant attendance during school hours, and their remuneration is only £12 a year, increased by a few shillings in the results fees, will he give the matter early attention?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Representations were made during the recess by the Commissioners to the Irish Government in relation to the remuneration of workmistresses in National schools, but the Treasury, having given these representations their best consideration, were unable to sanction the proposals of the Commissioners. As regards the second paragraph, I have already pointed out that workmistresses are not employed for the full school day, and that in the year 1886 their fixed salaries, with the approval of the Treasury, were augumented to the present amount. The number of workmistresses employed in mixed National schools was 843 in the year ended 31st December 1895, and in addition to the fixed salary of £12 they are paid results fees varying from sixpence to three shillings in respect of each girl passed.

FIJI.

Mr. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, can he explain why a Blue-Book, embodying valuable information as to the causes of the serious decline in the native population of Fiji during recent years, has not been published by the Government of that Crown Colony; is there any document or dispatch in the Colonial

Office that would throw light upon this proceeding; and will he call for an explanation from the Governor?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: The Report in question has been received and is at present under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. It would not be desirable, or in accordance with the usual practice in such cases, to publish the Report in the Colony in its present stage.

RELIEF OF KASSALA.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the communication in which the Italian Government requested Her Majesty's Government to assist them against the Dervishes by military advance into the Northern Provinces of the Soudan; and, by whom the communication was made?

Mr. CURZON: The communications in question were received from the Italian Ambassador in London. Their substance has already appeared in telegrams, between the Ambassador and his Government, that were published in the Italian Green-Book of last year, and were read out in this House by the hon. Member for Northampton in the Debate on June 5 1896.

Mr. MACNEILL: I now ask the right hon. Gentleman again, will he lay these communications *in extenso* on the Table?

Mr. CURZON: No, Sir; there is no necessity to lay communications between the Italian Ambassador and his own Government on the Table of this House. They have been published by the Italian Government and have appeared in the reports of the proceedings of this House, as the hon. Member will see if he refers to "Hansard."

Mr. MACNEILL: I desire, Mr. Speaker, to ask you a question on the rules of procedure governing Debates in this House. I wish to know from you whether, when a document is referred to in debate by a Minister of the Crown, or a gentleman representing a Minister of the Crown, it is not imperative upon him to lay that document on the Table? In reference to this matter I would cite a precedent which occurred in this House on July 17 1857. On that occasion Sir Charles Wood, the then First Lord of the Admiralty, did not quote from but referred to a letter he had received. He was asked to produce that letter in its entirety, and Mr. Disraeli made the following observations in the Debate and laid down this rule:—

> "There should be no reference to any Papers that were not laid on the Table or that were not meant to be laid on the Table afterwards. The moment a Minister referred even to a private letter, it became a State document. That was a salutary principle which always prevailed in their Debates. Were it otherwise, the opponents of the Minister could have no chance in Debate. He could always be referring to private matter in his portfolio to support his case."

Mr. Disraeli called it a private letter, and he was corrected by some Gentleman calling out "It is a public letter." To that Mr. Disraeli replied:—

> "What! a public letter. That is a worse case still. It is even a more flagrant case when a public document is kept secret from the House."

I say this case which I have cited is on all fours with what occurred on Friday evening in this House.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: If a Minister refers to a particular document by quoting part of it or stating what the effect of the contents of that particular document is, then the House is entitled to see the document itself. But I do not understand that any question of that kind arises here. A Minister is not bound, having stated in answer to a question or otherwise that there have been communications generally to such and such an effect with a foreign Government, to produce the document which would bear out his statement. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. MACNEILL: With great respect Sir, the right hon. Gentleman specifically referred on Friday night to communications. At that time the point of order was not taken either before the Chairman of Committees or yourself; but is there not a clear distinction when a Minister specifically refers to a certain document which he refuses to produce?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: There is a great difference between specifically referring to communications generally and specifically referring to the contents of a particular document. Nothing of the latter kind seems to have taken place here. [*Cheers.*]

ILLEGAL TRAWLING (CORK).

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that English steam trawlers are in the habit of fishing off the coast of Ballycotton, county Cork, upon Sundays, and that upon Sunday last one of these trawlers was thus engaged close to the mouth of the bay; and, whether steps will be taken to protect the Ballycotton fishermen from this illegal practice?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Chief Officer of the Coastguard at Ballycotton states he has never seen English steam trawlers fishing in this locality on Sundays, but that on Sunday the 31st January one passed at the entrance to the bay though it was not at the time fishing. On Monday last I informed the hon. Member that a bye-law had been prepared with a view to prohibit steam-trawling inside Ballycotton Bay. This bye-law will shortly be submitted to the Lord Lieutenant in Council.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): Arising out of that answer might I ask the right hon Gentleman is it not a fact that owing to the great damage done on the Scottish coast by these steam trawlers it was found necessary to prevent steam trawling within three miles of the coast, and whether in view of that fact the Government have any intention of introducing a similar law for the Irish coast?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not acquainted with the practice in Scotland, but if the hon. Member will put the question on the Paper I will endeavour to answer it.

CRETE.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office have yet received any official information concerning the alleged burning of the village of Galata, and the reported murder of a Christian Judge, M. Markoulakis, at Canea; whether he is aware that the Bishop of Canea and the Administrative Council of Notables have forwarded to the Consuls a memorandum denouncing the violence and misdeeds of the Turks, and imploring the prompt intervention of the Powers with a view to the immediate application of the reforms; and, if he can say what action has been taken by the representatives of the Powers to deal with this dangerous condition of affairs?

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will also answer at the same time the following question, of which I have given him private notice:—whether the Mussulman inhabitants of Crete have been driven to the coast from their homes by Christian insurgents and subjected to grievous maltreatment, and what steps Great Britain and the other Powers propose to take in order to protect the Mussulman inhabitants and to restore order, in view of the fact that the Sultan and the Turkish Government have given all the reforms in Crete asked for by the Powers?

***Mr. CURZON**: As regards Galata and the reported murder of M. Markoulakis, there is nothing to add to the last answer returned to the hon. Member. The memorandum referred to has been sent home by Her Majesty's Consul. It calls attention to the fear of Mussulman agitation, and represents the need for foreign gendarmes in the towns. As regards the general situation in the island, about which the House will naturally desire the latest information, I have to state that the position at and around Canea Halepa, and Suda Bay has been grave for the last few days. Fighting, or rather the discharge of firearms, has been continuous, but there seems to be no foundation for the rumours as to a massacre that have appeared in some quarters, and, so far, the loss of life is reported as comparatively small. Flames broke out in many places in the town, and every exertion has been made by the foreign ships of war to subdue them, and in these efforts they were seconded by both the Christian and Mussulman population. Much difficulty resulted from scarcity of water supply. The Turkish troops are reported to have behaved in an exemplary manner, and there was practically no plundering. The last account, dated this morning, states that the fire has now been completely extinguished, though nearly 200 houses and some large oil stores have been burnt, that upwards of 5,000 refugees have been embarked, and that the firing has ceased on all sides round Canea. At Candia the Mussulman population, who complained that they were defenceless while the Christians were armed, became uncontrollable, and are reported to have taken a quantity of rifles from the arsenal, but the latest intelligence is that the town continues quiet. As it is reported that there is great scarcity of food, the Admiral in command of the Mediterranean Squadron is sending the troopship *Tyne* from Malta with biscuits and meat for 1,200 persons for a fortnight. Her Majesty's ships *Barfleur*, *Scout*, *Nymph*, *Fearless*, *Dragon*, and a second battleship are at present in Cretan waters, and the *Revenge* with Admiral Harris on board, is on her way there. The commanders of these ships, in co-operation with Her Majesty's Consul and with Colonel Chermside, late Military Attaché at Constantinople, and representative of this country on the Gendarmerie Commission, have been labouring without cease to allay the disorder and alarm, to prevent more serious developments, and to afford protection to the refugees. In answer to the supplementary question put by my hon. Friend below the gangway, I have already in the answer I have read described generally the steps taken by the representatives of the Powers in Crete. I can assure him that we are as anxious to protect the Mussulman as the Christian inhabitants of the island—[*cheers*]—and that the steps which I have described as taken by our officials have been directed to that end. But so far as the reports—of which I have read a great many—lead me to form an opinion, it is that the maltreatment appears to be about evenly distributed between the two parties. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. FLYNN asked if it were true that large numbers of Christians had taken refuge on board ships and that Turkish troops had rebelled against the Vali.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member must give notice of the question.

MR. DILLON asked if there was any definite information as to the actual loss of life?

*MR. CURZON replied that the only figures that the Foreign Office had reported the loss of life at not more than 30.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked if the Government would take steps to see that some protection was offered to the Mussulmans of the interior?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice.

FACTORY ACCIDENT, BATLEY.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he is aware that an inquest was held on Saturday, 23rd January, at Batley, by the Coroner for the West Riding, on the death of one Fred. Taylor, which occurred by accident in the Phœnix Mills, Batley, and that the Coroner neither gave notice of the inquest to the Factory Inspector for the district nor adjourned the inquest for the Inspector's attendance, in accordance with section 19 of the Factory and Workshop Act 1895; and, whether he will take steps to secure the due observance of the law in future?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have communicated with the Home Office upon the subject of the question of the right hon. Baronet, and I understand that the facts are correctly stated in the first paragraph of the question. I am also informed that the Coroner has been communicated with, in order to insure that in future the procedure directed by the Statute is observed. Upon the facts before me, it does not seem to me to be a case in which I ought to take proceedings under the Statute, as I have nothing to show that it is necessary, in the interests of justice, that another inquest should be held; but I shall be glad to consider any further representation if the right hon. Baronet wishes me to do so.

ROYAL BOUNTY FUND (GEORGE BROOKS).

MR. DAVITT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (1) will he explain what are the rules, regulations, or practices governing the allocation of grants from the Royal Bounty Fund; and (2) upon whose recommendation a sum of money from this source was given to George Brooks, who was recently the plaintiff in one or more libel suits?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to the second paragraph of the Question, I am alone responsible for all representations for grants from the Royal Bounty Fund. As regards the first paragraph of the question, no rules or regulations have been laid down by Parliament on this subject, but there is a body of official tradition which has been handed on from one First Lord to another, and to that tradition and practice I have endeavoured to conform.

MR. DAVITT: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that he would find a resolution adopted by this House—[*cries of* "Order, order!"]—concerning the distribution of this money.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I am not aware of that.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Does the right hon. Gentleman desire to make further explanation of his having allocated this money to Mr. Brooks? [*Laughter.*]

[No answer was given.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a question about the business of to-day. The first order of the day is Supply, Army Estimates, in the name of the Under Secretary for War. I observe also on the Paper a notice relating to what are called the proposals of the Government. We have no knowledge of any proposals of the Government. There has been no notice of any such proposals. I have heard it rumoured that a statement has been made about the military plans of the Government in another place. But we are bound not to know anything about that. [*Opposition laughter, and cheers.*] The Army Estimates have apparently been opened by the Government in another place, and it would be out of order to know anything on the subject. But there are a few people I believe who read newspapers—[*laughter*]—and those persons may know something about the intentions of the Government upon military affairs. But here we know nothing of the proposals of the Government, and what I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman is that before we go to a discussion upon the Speaker leaving the Chair we should know the scheme of the Government by a statement from the Under Secretary. Otherwise it is quite impossible to deal either generally or in detail with the matter. The usual practice has been to state the Army Estimates after the Speaker has left the Chair. Within my own recollection there have been several instances where it was thought more convenient that the statement should be made when the Speaker was in the Chair. If it be true that a statement has been made in another place of the military intentions of the Government that is a conclusive reason why, before we discuss them here, a statement should be made here. ["Hear!"]

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) asked whether the proposals of the Government were not contained in Parliamentary papers signed by the Minister for War, and circulated among the Members of the House?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: I do not know whence the right hon. Gentleman got his views on constitutional procedure or how long he has entertained them, but I have often heard him quote at unnecessary length, speeches which had been made in the other House.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Not on financial statements.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Is there any difference? ("Hear, hear!") I thought the right hon. Gentleman laid it down that he never knew about what went on in the other House, and that if by accident he heard from some obscure sources what passed there he never dared to make use of his knowledge in the House of Commons. [*Laughter.*] I have closely followed the right hon. Gentleman's method of procedure, and should have thought his practice hardly squared with his theory. But, however that may be, the question of my hon. and gallant Friend supplies an answer to the right hon. Gentleman. There has been circulated, and there is in the hands of Members no doubt, a concise but clear and adequate summary of the proposals of the Government with regard to the Army Estimates, and this appears to me to be a sufficient basis for such discussion as may take place before the Speaker leaves the Chair. Under these circumstances I do not think there is any reason to depart from what is the usual, but not invariable, practice of waiting until the Speaker is out of the Chair before the Under Secretary for

War makes his general statement on the Army Estimates.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Are we to understand that before we are asked to consider the Army Estimates we shall have no more information than is contained in the memorandum which has been referred to? If that is sufficient for any one question it is sufficient for the whole, and I should have expected that the Leader of the House would have seen at what disadvantages the House is placed.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that there is no question before the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

MILITARY FORCES (MAINTENANCE).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) proposed to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add instead thereof the words—

> "this House, while ready to provide the funds required for the efficient maintenance of our Military forces, desires to be convinced that the present system of enlistment and terms of service are such as to be suitable to the requirements of the Empire."

He said the total cost of our national defences was now larger than it had ever been before. Last year the military and naval Votes with the loan money and the Indian expenditure and the expenditure of the self-governing colonies, amounted to £63,000,000 a year, and as far as it was possible to compute the expenditure of the present year it was likely to be on the same scale. Some items would be less, some more, but £63,000,000 a year seemed to be the sum at which our military and naval expenditure stood and was likely to stand. Of this enormous sum the military expenditure of the country formed more than half. This was a curious fact, because this Empire was called an Empire of the Seas, and all persons concerned in Imperial defence, including soldiers, were generally inclined to admit the Primacy of the Navy in defence. It was a remarkable fact that, although it was generally admitted that the Navy stood first as regarded the defence of the Empire, more than half of our defence expenditure was spent on the land forces. Of course he could not say what the expenditure for the next financial year would be, but taking the Estimates of the next financial year, it was fair to say that our military expenditure at home now stood at £18,855,000. It was difficult to detach the Army at home from the Army in India, and the Indian expenditure in the previous financial year, without anything for Burmah or Chitral, amounted to £16,127,000 odd. Adding together what we spent out of Votes here for the Home Army, and what was estimated for the present year for the Indian Army, which was largely paid here, they obtained a total expenditure of £34,982,000 for the land forces. In addition to that there was a large expenditure on military works, which next year, when from five to six millions sterling would be taken in the Loan Bill of the present year, would be very large. There was also the expenditure of the self-governing colonies, so that he estimated the total expenditure on land forces or fixed defences at at least 39 millions a year. All parties—and the Army itself—were willing to admit that the Navy stood first. That admission had been made very fully on the part of the present Government by Lord Lansdowne, who was responsible for the present Estimates. The present Secretary of State for War had admitted fully that it was the duty of the Navy to protect us against invasion, and to protect our coaling stations, which were garrisoned by the Army, against invasion. He had told them that the coaling stations of the Navy need only be garrisoned by the Army as against what he called cruiser attack, and said that they were not required to be prepared to resist attack from a large hostile squadron, carrying with it a considerable expeditionary force, as from such attack it was the business of the fleet to protect them; and that the enemy's fleet could not be watching or engaging our fleet and at the same time delivering an attack in force against one of our coaling stations. And yet the Empire was spending 39 millions sterling on land forces and fixed defences. India, of course, contributed towards these Estimates, and so did the Crown Colonies, but the latter contributed at a very different rate to that at which India contributed. [*Cheers.*] The present Government, moreover, had been decreasing the contributions of the Crown Colonies; that was the case with the Straits Settlements, according to the latest Return, and with Ceylon, where the contribution towards these Estimates was fixed at 7½ per cent. of the gross revenue, exclusive of land sales. It was a remarkable fact that, at a time when plague and famine were rife in India, we obtained the utmost farthing from India, although this pressed with even cruel severity upon the Indian taxpayer, while we obtained only 7½ per cent. of the gross revenue of a colony like Ceylon whose prosperity was extraordinary. We were spending on our land forces and defences, putting aside the self-governing colonies, 37 millions sterling, and he thought that even the Under Secretary for War would not deny that our military system was by far the dearest in the world. There was an attempt made to explain the enormous cost of our military system by the absence of military conscription in this country, but large deductions had to be made on the other side. For instance, the cost of forage in Germany or France was overwhelmingly greater than our own—partly because we had hardly any horses in our Army. [*Laughter.*] Then it had to be remembered that such countries as France or Germany had to keep clothing, ammunition, and arms not for the Army with the colours or for a reserve like our own, but for a war Army of over four million men each, and all that had to be kept up out of the annual Votes. This, he thought, went to prove that the absence of conscription was not in itself a sufficient answer to those who urged that our Army was too dear. On one occasion he had had to read a paper at the Statistical Society on the question of the cost of the Army, which produced a very interesting discussion between the military authorities of this country, and it had to be admitted that the word "conscription" did not constitute a complete answer to the argument drawn from the cost. On the other hand, it was admitted that the British Navy, considering the money we spent on it, was on the whole more efficient than the navies of other countries, and he thought it was also cheaper. In this argument in regard to conscription the War Office took credit for the amount of the pay which was given to the soldiers. But the pay of the Volunteers was non-existent, that of the Militia was very small, and the pay of the private soldier, although larger than that of the private soldier in foreign armies, was, in his opinion, very much less than it might be with advantage to the country. He admitted that no close comparison between the cost of our Army and those of foreign countries was possible; he merely protested against this argument of conscription being considered as a complete answer to the question of cost. Then he would ask what return we got for this cost in the shape of an Army that could really be employed for those purposes for which it was possible to contemplate our Army being used. ["Hear, hear!"] He would assume that we possessed command of the seas. The Secretary of State for the Colonies made a very interesting speech last Saturday week at Birmingham upon this point, in which he said that the House of Commons had increased the Empire and that it must therefore increase its Army of defence. That was rather a specious argument, but one that would not bear investigation. To begin with, large portions of our Empire, such as Australia and British North America, with the exception of the fortress of Halifax, were not defended by the Army at all. They might say that the number of troops we sent abroad needed to be increased; but it had not increased of late years, but had rather diminished, and yet there was an enormously increased expense. The Secretary of State for the Colonies had deprecated any depreciation of our defence resources, and he should be the last person to make any statement with regard to them which could strengthen the hands of foreign countries, but they all knew that foreign military attachés in this country, and the intelligence departments of foreign armies were thoroughly acquainted with everything that could be said for or against our military system. He believed it was understood by foreign Governments that the utmost force we could send out of this country was 16,000 men. It must be admitted that our Army was the only army in the world which had no permanent organisation in brigades, divisions, or corps, no permanent staff for war, and, he was afraid, no general training for war in the absence of manœuvres, which alone could train an army for service in the field. He feared that that fact must mean disaster in any serious war in which our Army was engaged. Undoubtedly the opinions expressed in evidence before the Wantage Commission by men now responsible for the Army—Lord Wolseley, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Sir Redvers Buller—exceeded in pessimism anything which could be said by any Member of the House. The Adjutant General at the time of the Wantage Commission said—

> "the military authorities have never been told what it is that the British Army is expected to do in war,"

and he went on to point out that whatever it was that the Army was expected to do it was unfit, as at present organised, to do it. Lord Lansdowne admitted most frankly that the British Army was unfit for war.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): When did he admit that?

*SIR C. DILKE: He admitted it in another place. The Adjutant General in his Wantage evidence said, "not a single battalion at home is fit to go to war."

MR. BRODRICK: Without the Reserve.

*SIR C. DILKE said the Reserve was untrained, and in that respect it differed from every other reserve in the world. It was not the intention of Lord Cardwell when he established the short service system that the Reserve should be used on any but great occasions, and one of the worst points in the present policy of Lord Lansdowne was that the Reserves Bill, which had been condemned by every competent military Member of the House, was to be reintroduced. When giving his evidence the Adjutant General must have forgotten the battalions of Guards. It would be universally admitted that those battalions were fit to go to war. The Under Secretary shook his head, as he evidently thought they were not fit; he should have thought they were fit to go to war without their Reserve men, or, at any rate, could have picked up sufficient men to go to war very quickly. The Guards were the force in this country which, next to some battalions of Volunteers, were most easily mobilised; but they differed from the Volunteers in being under highly skilled officers and non-commissioned officers. ["Hear, hear!"] One of the great defects in the present scheme was that it would spoil the only battalions which at the present time were fit for war. Sir Evelyn Wood, in his evidence before the Wantage Commission, said:—

> "We have not 30 per cent. of the rank and file who are equal to carrying the service marching order,"

and Lord Wolseley agreed. Anyone who had watched the marching at Aldershot during recent years must have noticed a progressive decline instead of an improvement, and one seldom saw a British battalion carrying packs in marching order. ["The Guards!"] He was talking about the ordinary infantry. Foreign armies carried their service marching order on all occasions. Even the Swiss, who had a very short period of training, marched with 60lb. weight on their backs, and they could march 30 miles a day. In the present state of things the Government proposed to drop the manœuvres. The Under Secretary shook his head, but the Secretary of State spoke of less extended manœuvres. £80,000 in one lump was dropped, and there was a large diminution in land transport work, which was explained as meaning that there were not to be manœuvres in the present year. Many persons believed that we could never have a really efficient army unless we had manœuvres. But even manœuvres could not make battalions, and he asked what return we got for the money we spent. Of course in India there was a certain return. We could put upon the frontier in India a force of 70,000 men, of which two-thirds would be natives. But even to put that force in the field 700 officers would have to be got from home for whom no provision had ever been made in the Estimates. What did we get here? We got the Guards and a little field artillery, but nothing else without fresh expenditure and a great waste of time after the declaration of war. The field artillery were to be slightly increased this year. They were diminished by a previous Government, and credit was taken afterwards for having increased them again. But there was no increase in men or horses, and he could not understand what the increase was that was not to be discovered in horses and men. He could not attach any particular importance to the increase of artillery when it was measured by one battery. The net amount of increase in field artillery was to be under 200 men and 66 horses, and he dared say that in these horses were included some garrison artillery horses, for some garrison batteries had officers' horses on the establishment; but even assuming that the field artillery was to get all these 66 horses, that was not a large increase, considering that the field artillery had been steadily declining in amount for a number of years, whilst the War Estimates had been increasing. There was one part of the proposals of the Government which he heartily approved—namely, the proposal to increase the West India Regiment. That would tend to secure our naval base at Sierra Leone, and was a step that had been pressed upon the attention of the Government by private Members for the last five or six years. But what was going to be done respecting the British infantry? It was admitted that the battalions at home were killed for the sake of the small Indian mobile army. The work thrown upon officers and non-commissioned officers who had to train the masses of recruits to be drafted to India was work calculated to break the hearts of the best men. Nothing could be more painful than the description given of our existing battalions in this country by men who knew the facts of the case. There were too many boys in them, and they were there for too short a time. Lord Lansdowne had said that the evil was the total inability of that portion of the Army which was at home to support the portion abroad, and that our present system was worked under conditions which absolutely precluded the possibility of success. Previous Secretaries of State for War had been telling the House for many years that the Army was in a satisfactory condition. Remembering the optimistic statements made from 1888 onwards, he thought the frank description of the condition of the Army which Lord Lansdowne had given was remarkable. In 1892 his right hon. Friend the late Secretary of State for War, speaking on the subject of war administration, referred to the "appalling cost," and said, "we are tied by traditions, prejudices, and habits which it is hopeless to overcome." He asked the House to make the attempt now to overcome the difficulties of which his right hon. Friend then spoke. If there were co-operation between those Radicals who honestly desired to get the article for which the country paid and the soldiers who now realised almost without exception the difficulties into which the Army had fallen—if there were co-operation between those two sections of the House he felt certain that the difficulties would be overcome at once. His right hon. Friend the late Secretary of State for War, whilst admitting the primacy of the Navy, had declined to contemplate the possibility of our taking part in a continental war. How, then, could he justify an expenditure of £36,000,000 a year upon our land forces? When he quitted office the right hon. Gentleman had prepared, as Lord Rosebery told the country at the Albert Hall, a great scheme of administrative reform. What were the results of that great scheme? There was this plan now brought forward by the Government. The Secretary of State for War had said at Bristol that all would be right if the House of Commons would give him 11 more battalions; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had replied that he would not consent, and now the Government brought forward a totally different proposal—a makeshift. The Secretary of State for War said that we must establish equilibrium between the battalions at home and abroad. Up to the present time there had never been such equilibrium, and it would not be established by the proposals of the Government. It was part of Lord Cardwell's scheme that whenever two regimental battalions were absent from home at the same time the militia battalion of the regiment should be embodied. But that had never been done, and there had never been equilibrium, because ever since 1872 there had been more battalions abroad than at home. By sending three battalions of Guards away and so spoiling the only good infantry battalions that we had at home, and by creating a battalion of Cameron Highlanders—as if that could be done by a stroke of the pen—they would have four additional battalions abroad. This was called a temporary arrangement. What was the meaning of that? Was there the smallest probability that the state of affairs in South Africa would shortly permit the return home of troops from that country, or was it likely, after the speech to which they had listened on Friday, that a battalion would be brought home from Egypt? He thought that that was unlikely, and that the plan of the Government would have nothing temporary about it. Even if 11 battalions were added to the Army, was it probable that our military system would be a success and that the country would get an adequate return for its outlay? The Secretary of State had brought forward his plan as an anonymous proposal. It was talked about vaguely as Sir Arthur Haliburton's plan, and the Under Secretary had said, "This plan is put before us by the military authorities as the best and most economical." Who were the authorities thus referred it? Did the Under Secretary mean that it was the plan of the Commander-in-Chief? They did not give their confidence to the Secretary of State for War or to the First Lord of the Admiralty in military or naval matters apart from the advice which they received and communicated to the House. They, like himself, were amateurs, however great the pains they took; and when a new system was being established, or a new departure made, while admitting that their past system had failed and that they were engaged in patching it up, the House ought to be furnished with some kind of military authority in support of the scheme. ["Hear, hear!"] Personally he did not believe that this was the plan of the military authorities; he did not believe it was the plan of the Commander-in-Chief, of Sir Redvers Buller, and of Sir Evelyn Wood. The present plan was not even that of the Secretary of State for War himself at the time he made the speech; and it might, indeed, be a plan which was forced on the military authorities, and which they might have accepted from the Government; but from a perusal of it he did not think that it was the plan which they themselves had devised. The Under Secretary for War could not object to what he had just said in using the ordinary sources of information as to what the real opinion of the military authorities was. In the Debate on cordite ammunition, it was said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the real opinion of the military authorities was known, although the Financial Secretary for War of the late Government (Mr. Woodall) said that

> "the War Office had been advised by the Director of Artillery, whose conclusion had been accepted and confirmed by the Adjutant General."

He said that this was an anonymous proposal. The Government when they came into office chose Lord Wolseley as Commander-in-Chief. If the Government were not going to back Lord Wolseley up in the proposals he made they ought to come to the House and say what was his opinion and their opinion of the situation. The Government ought to have the courage to back him up, because otherwise they misled the country by the weight of the Commander-in-Chief's name. The fact was that the House and the country were receiving the opinions on what was evidently a complicated disease, not of the physician but of unknown amateurs. [*Cheers.*] He thought that the Government had on this occasion a great opportunity. They made a new departure by appointing a Committee of the Cabinet for defence, and they made certain variations in the reforms of the late Secretary for War; and he believed that public opinion would have supported the Government in any drastic and effective measures to remedy the present condition of the Army. [*Cheers.*] He was, however, greatly disappointed at the miserable makeshift proposal which the Government had offered to the House. ["Hear, hear!"] This particular anonymous proposal failed to meet the battalion difficulty. It obviously left the Field Artillery far below the responsibilities of the country; it increased the fixed defences of the country, which were already large in proportion to her mobile strength; but it spoiled one of the home Infantry forces. The Guards were now a short service Infantry force; the majority of the men served three years, and it was difficult to send abroad a three years' force. It was impossible under three years' service to allow the Guards to go abroad in the sense in which the Line battalions went abroad. They could not be sent to India or to any other distant place; they could only be sent to the Mediterranean, which meant Malta, Gibraltar, or Egypt. But in all these places the difficulties of training were very great, and the sentry duty was very heavy; the troops so used were essentially garrison troops. If the Guards were sent to Egypt, to Malta, or Gibraltar, the young soldiers would be subject to fever in a considerable degree, and undoubtedly most of the battalions which were sent there would pass into the Reserve virtually untrained. They would get no proper exercise in field work, and in the garrison stations they would become garrison troops. Then the battalions left at home would undoubtedly, though not in so large a degree, undergo the deterioration to which Line battalions were subject by having to keep up their corresponding battalions abroad. It was said that Lord Methuen approved the Government scheme. He was one of the best generals of his age which we or any other country possessed—[*cheers*]—and Lord Methuen had shown that he was a very excellent Parliamentary speaker. But in his judgment Lord Methuen had managed to express his extreme objection to the Government scheme in language which was interpreted by the Government to be language of resigned approval. Lord Methuen said there were three evils in Gibraltar which existed in a greater degree there than in London: Drunkenness, disease, and heavy sentry duty.

> "The question of recruiting was one with which he had nothing to do, but he did hope that if any difficulty was found in getting recruits, and if the Brigade of Guards was in consequence to lose its fine physique, some steps would be taken to stop any deterioration."

Lord Methuen added that

> "he should not be doing his duty if he did not point out the dangers and difficulties in the way."

[*Cheers.*] It was not needful to dwell on the great cost and extreme inconvenience of having those troops perpetually at sea.

Sir Charles Dilke.

They would have, according to the Government scheme, to be continually relieved at Gibraltar, to be frequently crossing the Bay of Biscay, and there would be the cost of transport; but this was a minor detail. The real point to consider was whether the troops sent to the Reserve would not have had their efficiency destroyed by their want of training, and whether the battalions at home would not be ruined in order to support the battalions at Gibraltar. As to the reduction of military expenditure, while at the same time securing reforms, he said that he had not much hope of a considerable saving in the military Estimates so long as we proceeded on the present lines. One economy which might be effected would be to hand over the naval bases to the Admiralty. He believed that the Admiralty did not want to take them, but foreign Admiralties had to take charge of such bases. There were some, again, who would vote the money in a lump to the military authorities, and let the Commander-in-Chief spend it very much as he chose, without control from that House. In short, these people thought the Army should be left to itself. Lord Cromer gave some interesting evidence upon that point before the Indian Expenditure Commission, and he said:—

> "The fault of the English system is that it looks too much to the amount spent but not enough to seeing that the money is well spent, and sometimes certainly it is not well spent."

It would be necessary for Parliament, if it wished to have what Lord Wolseley called a cheaper Army of equal strength, or a larger Army at the same price, to adopt a complete change of system. The real question was what that system should be. He thought it should be a short-service system for the Home Army, combined with a long-service system for India and for the naval bases, if the Admiralty would not take those bases. Lord Roberts had expressed an opinion on that point. He said:—

> "If a system had to be framed afresh to meet our requirements, the separation"

—he did not shrink from the word—

> "of the infantry into permanent home and foreign service battalions might be conducive to the interest of the soldier and of the State."

He also used these words:—

> "The present system is extremely prejudicial to India financially."

Now, one of the reasons which had been given for not making a great change was that somebody in the War Office—he believed Sir A. Haliburton—thought it would mean that India would have to pay more for her Army than at present. It seemed a remarkable fact, however, that Lord Roberts, with his enormous experience of India, and General Chesney, with his still greater experience of Indian military finance, should both unhesitatingly express the opinion that financially India would be the better off for the change. When, some time ago, he, in collaboration with Mr. Spencer Wilkinson, ventured to write on this subject, they had certain actuarial calculations with regard to the cost of separate systems for enlistment for the Home Army and for India. Those calculations had been contradicted, but they had never been in his opinion upset, and since then, with some modifications, they had received the public approval of Lord Roberts and General Chesney. The system that Lord Roberts suggested was three years' service for Home, with a prolongation for India of the men who wished to remain for nine years' service. That was the essence of Lord Roberts's scheme. It had been said there would be difficulty in getting sufficient men for the long service. [*Ministerial cheers.*] On that question he submitted that the opinions of Lord Roberts and General Chesney should have some weight, and also the experience of the Royal Marines. He believed Lord Roberts was right in his belief that half the men would go for long service if the service were made reasonably attractive. If that were the objection of the Government to the change, then he suggested it would be possible, as regards certain forces, to bring the question to the test of actual decision by the men themselves. It would be easy to see what proportion of men could be raised, for instance, when the Marines were being increased, as he presumed they would be this year, by volunteers from among short-service men. He should be prepared himself to suggest a plan by which such a test could be made. If he were asked what the expenditure of the country on its Army ought to be, he answered that he would be prepared, and he believed the country was prepared, to spend whatever was necessary for our life and existence. [*Ministerial cheers.*] But they wanted to have it shown that we were, on the total computation of this immense expenditure, allotting a proper share to the Army and Navy respectively, and spending the portion allotted to the Army in the most effective way. [*Cheers.*] He had no desire to express want of confidence in the Government generally; he confined himself strictly to their military scheme, but he knew it was open to them to declare—and Governments generally were not slow to do so—that they would treat any Amendment in Supply as a vote of want of confidence in themselves. Some hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite had given notices which technically amounted to want of confidence also. He could not assent to the milder form of asking only for inquiry, because the fact was, since he had been a Member of the House, the reports of Committees and Commissions on this subject already mounted to a column taller than himself, and everything that could be said had been said in evidence, and was on record. He appealed to those who wanted their money's worth for what they spent, and also to those who wanted an Army fit to do that which, by the admission of the Government themselves, our present Army was not able to perform, to vote for his Motion.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) seconded the Motion, and said that, although the right hon. Baronet had called himself an amateur, he was yet an admitted expert in all matters connected with civil and military administration, and his reputation extended far beyond the walls of that House. [*Cheers.*] In his opinion, the charge of inefficiency of the Home Army was caused, not because Parliament voted insufficient money, but because the money was improperly and inefficiently spent. [*Cheers.*] The country got the maximum of cost and the minimum of result in its Army. An expenditure of 19½ millions resulted in a force of 154,000 with the colours and 78,000 in the reserves. He was glad to know that the Government were going to increase the Army, but many regarded the proposals as makeshift and patchwork. He approved of several of the proposals, but he did not think that those with reference to the Brigade of Guards would increase its efficiency. He did not wish to say anything in depreciation of that Brigade, which for 250 years had been bound up with the history of the Empire, and which was the oldest commissioned corps in existence. The Foot Guards were largely recruited in London and the metropolitan counties, and the men were able while soldiering to keep in touch with their friends. Thus, when they joined the reserve, they were able to get civilian employment much more easily than soldiers of the Line; and it was that fact which was the great deterrent to recruiting for the Line. If the Foot Guards were to be sent abroad they would lose this advantage. At Gibraltar there was no drill-ground suitable for large bodies of troops, and there were so many garrison duties for which men had to be detached that the Colonel had little opportunity of getting the regiment together. By forming the Guards into six battalions—three at home and three abroad—those at home, which fed those abroad, would be reduced to the position of squeezed lemons. As to the field batteries, Lord Lansdowne said that by increasing them by one there would be guns enough for the three home Army Corps. According to the French and Prussian standards, there were five guns to 1,000 men; and at that rate we ought to have 375 guns for our three Army Corps. But the number of guns we should absolutely possess would, at the most, be 320, and for the 400,000 infantry, beyond the three Army Corps, there would not be a single battery. Those who were in France in 1871 would know that the defeat of the Army of the Loire and of the Army of the East, under Bourbaki, was almost entirely due to shortness of guns. It was easy to improvise a regiment of conscripts, but a battery could no more be improvised than an ironclad. We were to have only 320 guns, while a small country like Roumania in 1885 had 300 guns, and Servia had 285. As for ammunition trains, which were an essential part of the artillery service, we had absolutely none in this country. The War Office had not shown a proper grasp of this question of army augmentation. This scheme ought to have represented a parting of the ways with the old methods. The addition of a few thousand men was nothing; augmentation ought to have been considered in connection with a well-conceived plan of national and Imperial defence. The Authorities might have considered the scheme of a long-service army for India and a short-service army with a reserve for this country; the garrisoning of small outlying stations by the Marines, instead of by Line regiments which, so shut up, became inefficient for want of proper drill and manœuvring. The War Office might have considered also the scheme put forth by the *Daily Chronicle* for an Imperial army, in the formation of which the colonies should be invited to join, paying some part of the cost and finding a recruiting ground. Before giving this money, the House should consider what the War Office had done in the last 50 years. Its path had been strewn with failures. There was the scheme of 1872, the most fatuous and ridiculous ever imagined, in which the whole country was parcelled out into eight army corps which had no existence; the squadron system, which was soon abandoned, and the linked battalion system, which had proved an utter failure. In 1860—a normal year—the Army Estimates were £14,900,000, and for this sum an army of 236,000 men might have been put into the field. Last year's Estimates amounted to £19,500,000, and the total forces available were only 229,000 men. So that in 36 years the War Office had increased the Estimates by 36 per cent., and reduced the nominal forces available by 2½ per cent. That did not encourage the voting of more money to this Department. The French army represented a charge of 25 millions a year, and for that expenditure there were 600,000 men with the colours, and reserves of 2,500,000. In the German Confederation there was an expenditure of 27 millions, and there were 585,000 men with the colours, and reserves of 3,250,000. Switzerland, with a population of three millions, spent £1,000,000 a year, and had a first reserve of 250,000 men and a second of 220,000. And these forces were all brigaded and available when wanted. In 1870 the Prussian Staff put 400,000 men on the line of the Rhine and the Vosges in a few weeks. How long would it take the War Office to mobilise 35,000 at

Aldershot? But, unsatisfactory as was the nominal force available when compared with our expenditure, it was still more unsatisfactory in reality than on paper; for nearly 37,000 out of the 156,000 men were serving in the colonies. Most of the men of the Home Army serving abroad were shut up in Gibraltar and Malta, and in other small stations, where they had no chance of getting the necessary field drill and instruction. They consequently lost their efficiency and were unable to meet European troops in the field. In regard to the rest of the Home Army, 116,000 men, he would point out that the present Commander-in-Chief stated before the Wantage Committee that there was not a single battalion fit to be sent abroad, each being like a squeezed lemon; that it would have to be supplemented by the Reserve; and that that Reserve was practically a sham. He did not think there could be a stronger condemnation than those words of Lord Wolseley. Then, take the case of individual battalions. He knew one which was supposed to have a strength of 950 men in the ranks. But 400 of the men were under 20 years, and could not be sent out of the country. About 5 per cent. were what were called "specials"—their chest measurements were short and they were under 5ft. 4in. In addition to all that, there was a draft of from 120 to 150 men to be sent to the battalion serving abroad in the course of the next month. What then became of the strength of 950 men when only 320 men could be put into line? Lord Wolseley was therefore right when he said that the battalions at home were nothing more than "squeezed lemons." Then as to the cavalry branch of the service. He had never been able to understand, though he had served ten years in a dragoon regiment, why, with 13,000 dragoons, they should not have 13,000 horses to put them on. He knew very well that there were a great many double horses in some regiments—more horses than men to ride them very often. But that was because of the system under which recruits, after a lot of money was spent on their training, were put into the canteens or made officers' servants of instead of being made dragoons. Lord Wolseley had described the Reserve as a sham. How could there be an efficient Reserve when they were never called up? Some of the men of the Reserve had not worn a red coat for nine years, and since they left the colours, rifles, powder, guns, projectiles—everything, in fact, had been altered; and now the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary proposed to introduce a new helmet. Then, as to the Auxiliary Forces, he did not think he need take up the time of the House in describing their condition. He could understand the position of hon. Gentlemen like the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who wished to have the Army disbanded and the Navy dismantled, and desired to trust, like Lord Randolph Churchill, the warlike instincts of an ancient people; but he was surprised that a proposal to largely increase the expenditure on the Army should be made by right hon. Gentlemen who knew perfectly well that the Army was neither efficient nor to be relied on.

MR. BRODRICK said he always listened with the greatest possible respect to everything that fell from the right hon. Gentleman who had moved this Motion. There was probably no Member of the House who was not an Army man who had given so much of his time or attention to the subject of the organisation of the Army as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean. He therefore regretted very much that it became necessary occasionally for him, as Under Secretary for War, to controvert the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman, who, however, was often found supporting the policy of the present Government in regard to the defensive forces of the Empire. But he thought that on this occasion every Member of the House who had heard the denunciation of the whole Army system and the hostile criticism of every arrangement connected with the Army at home and in the Colonies, in the course of the two speeches which had been made in support of the Motion, must wonder how it was—to quote the concluding words of his hon. Friend the Member for South-East Essex—that men who knew that the Army was neither useful nor efficient could ask the House to spend a large extra sum in bolstering it up. [*Cheers.*] He wondered what his hon. Friend's idea was as to the process of mind by which a number of men sitting on the Treasury Bench could so far forget all the attributes on which all Members of the House prided themselves as to unite in bolstering up a rotten Army system and in making fresh demands for money without satisfying themselves that the money could be effectively spent in improving the condition of the Army. [*Cheers.*] He thought the fact that nine Secretaries of State had supported the system introduced by Lord Cardwell—modified since then in some minor respects—ought to be some guarantee that that system was not so absolutely rotten as it had just been described. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had said that the country ought to get more value for the money it spent on the Army; but the right hon. Gentleman never threw out a suggestion, in the course of his speech, as to how that better value was to be obtained for the expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman had, indeed, made one suggestion—that was that the soldiers should be more highly paid. Of course, they would all be glad to see that done, but it would mean an enormous plunge into the National purse. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman had put forward a scheme which had to some extent received the *imprimatur* of Lord Roberts. What would be the result of such a scheme if adopted? It would magnify every evil under which our Army system now suffered, and put upon India an increased charge of £640,000 a year. [*Cheers.*] Let the House consider what our Army had to do. There was no other army in the world subject to similar conditions. ["Hear, hear!"] In the first place, we had to maintain a force in India and the colonies of nearly 100,000 men; secondly, we had to provide a force fit for mobilisation to the extent the military authorities deemed necessary; thirdly, we had to provide the possibility of sending two army corps on foreign service; and, fourth, we had to provide for the exigencies of possible small wars, and he would remind the House that the small wars which we had undertaken—often surrounded with great difficulties—had been carried out with more success than had attended the efforts of foreign Powers under similar circumstances. [*Cheers.*] The short-service system was based on the principle that we should have an equal number of battalions at home and abroad, the battalions at home to find drafts for those abroad. The effect of this, of course, was that the home battalions were depleted annually of a number of their best men. That system was tried by Lord Cardwell under two different organisations, first with the home battalion at 450. That system failed entirely, and it was deserted for a system in which nearly all the battalions at home were placed on an establishment of 720 rank and file. But after the Indian and colonial drafts were taken away from these battalions they were reduced to a number at which they could not be sent abroad without drawing upon the reserves. It had been made a matter of complaint that the battalions were not effective for foreign service without the reservists being drawn upon; but that was inevitable, and he did not apologise for it under the circumstances. There was no foreign regiment, so far as he knew, which could be mobilised for the defence even of its own country without calling on the reserves. It was true that our reservists were not called out for training as foreign reserves were; but the men could not be called up arbitrarily without interfering with their employment. It would, of course, be an advantage to train the reservists to a greater extent, but it could not be done compulsorily. ["Hear, hear!"] In considering this point he would ask the House to bear in mind the extent of training the British soldier had with the colours. The British soldier was eight years with the colours and four or five years in the Reserve; and was it reasonable to suppose that a man would forget in four years what he had learnt in eight years of active service? In the German infantry the soldier was 20 months with the colours and two or three years in the reserve, but the men were trained ceaselessly, morning, noon, and night, and he would ask what sort of recruits would be obtained in this country if a man's life was made practically a slavery, as was the case with the German soldier in the first year of service? ["Hear, hear!"] He would be a bold War Minister who would come down to that House and propose a similar system of training for the British soldier. The French soldier was three years with the colours and seven years in the reserve, and the Austrian soldier the same. Therefore, the British soldier spent more than twice the time with the colours and a shorter period with the reserve than the foreign soldier. ["Hear, hear!"] In 1885 the reservists attached to 14 different regiments were called out for inspection. He would not give the names of the regiments, but he would read some of the reports of the inspecting officers. The first was a cavalry corps, and the men were reported, after a month's training, to be "fit to take their places in the ranks." The reports went on as to the other regiments—"efficient in drill," "efficient in drill and military duties," "efficiency excellent," "thoroughly efficient," and so on, the reports generally being to the effect that the Reserve men were efficient and fit for active service. ["Hear, hear!"] That experience ought at once to dispose of the idea that our Reserve force was a sham. ["Hear, hear!"] Whatever were the faults of Lord Cardwell's scheme, it, at all events, had this advantage—that it had provided for the first time an efficient Reserve of 80,000 men fit to take their places in the Line regiments. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had complained that there was a deficiency of field artillery at home, in comparison with the strength of the infantry. He might state that the field artillery had now been increased to the extent sufficient for three Army corps. ["Hear, hear!"] We had in store, and practically in readiness—though a few guns were still under conversion—all the reserve guns necessary for those Army corps to meet casualties or exigencies. The right hon. Gentleman also complained that there were no field guns attached to the great force of Volunteer infantry in the country; but, surely, if the Volunteer infantry was to be regarded as an integral part of the national defences, it was only right that they should take into account the 200 mobile guns in the hands of the Volunteer artillery, which would, in the event of invasion, be undoubtedly used in support of the infantry—["hear, hear!"]—though he was ready to admit that the Volunteers were not yet furnished with a regular artillery force. With regard to the complaint that the military manœuvres had been dropped this year, he could only say that the explanation was simple. The Government had had many difficulties to contend with in the matter, but they had an important Measure in hand relating to it, and it would be pushed forward as soon as possible. At any rate, the Government did not go one step from the declaration they made last year—namely, that it is desirable from time to time to hold large manœuvres. They hoped in the next year to have the large tract of ground on Salisbury Plain, to which reference had previously been made in the House, and for the purchase of which the necessary estimate had already been taken. The ground would be new to the troops and new to the generals, and would enable troops to be manœuvred on a much larger scale than at Aldershot or elsewhere. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman asked, "Do we get a force for any of the purposes of the Empire in any way equivalent to its expense?" and he had expressed his regret that the demand was so small. He did not think it was a small demand. ["Hear, hear!"] It was the largest increase which had been made to the Army for 25 years. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR C. DILKE said he did not express regret that the demand was so small. He expressed no opinion one way or the other upon that point, but he did express the belief that a large saving could not be made with the present system.

MR. BRODRICK said he was about to justify their proposal. It was quite true they had not asked for more field artillery.

*SIR C. DILKE said he did express regret with regard to the field artillery.

MR. BRODRICK said they did a good deal for field artillery last year. They added 81 guns, and they had got horses and men for three Army corps. After all, they could not do everything at once, and it was perfectly obvious that they must apply the military organisation to what they had got before they began to lay down plans for an occasion which had not yet come upon them. As regarded the garrison artillery, they had faced the question of providing for the adequate defence of the forts and coaling stations by largely increasing the number of such artillery. But the right hon. Baronet and those behind him had concentrated their attention on the infantry. What were the facts about the infantry? He hoped the right hon. Baronet would not think him discourteous if he declined at that moment to enter into the question of the Guards. It was to be raised on a distinct Motion later in the evening, and he thought it would be convenient to the House that the discussion should take place then. ["Hear, hear!"] But as regarded the number of regiments which it had been said should be added to the Line, he might say that the present number of Line battalions abroad was 76, and the present number at home was 65. Incidentally he might say that the right hon. Baronet was in error in stating that 25 years ago they had proportionately a larger number abroad.

*Sir C. DILKE: I did not say proportionately.

Mr. BRODRICK said he had so understood him. At all events, the position 25 years ago was that they had 71 battalions at home and 70 abroad. No short-service system could have a fair trial which for a long period had a strain of that kind put upon it. What it meant was that they had regiments abroad with no battalions at home to relieve them and forced to draw their recruits from depôts—by no means the best method of training recruits—and forced, therefore, to take a very large number of young soldiers into their ranks, and who, when they did come home, were in a state of very much less efficiency. The proposal of the Government, if it was accepted, as he hoped it would be, by the House, would prevent the necessity of raising six new Line battalions, as it would mean that instead of having 76 Line battalions abroad and 65 at home, they would in future have 73 abroad and 69 at home. The right hon. Baronet said, "Why didn't you make a clean business of it and raise four more new battalions?" ["Hear, hear!"] Their reply to that was that they had a right to consider that two of the battalions which were sent to South Africa last year were only there temporarily, and that any change in the state of affairs there which enabled them to bring those battalions home would make the number of battalions at home equal to those abroad. But the right hon. Gentleman challenged this decision, and practically said it had not been supported by military opinion. The Army Board, of which the Commander-in-Chief was a member, had been consulted continually throughout the year with regard to this proposal, and it finally submitted to the Secretary of State the following proposals:—(1) To add one battalion of field artillery; (2) To add 3,500 men to the garrison artillery; (3) To raise two new battalions of Guards; (4) to raise an additional battalion of the West India Regiment; and (5) To raise an additional battalion of Malta Militia. The Army Board also considered the condition of battalions of the Line, and they held that it was necessary that the lining should be put into such a position that the foreign battalions could be supplied without having two battalions of the same regiment abroad at the same time. The Government had made that decision except with regard to the two battalions he had mentioned, and therefore he was entitled to say, in reply to the right hon. Baronet, that the proposals of the Army Board, under the instructions which the Government naturally gave as to the purposes for which the Army was intended to be used, had been met by the provision which the Government had made. He might go one step further and say that, so far from there being, on the part of the military heads of the War Office, any feeling that they had been defrauded of what they might naturally have expected, the proposals of the Government, taken as a whole, had been gratefully accepted by one and all not merely as an instalment, but as, in the words of the Commander-in-Chief, "such a step forward as the Army has not made for many years." [*Cheers.*] He did not wish to labour this point, but he should like to say that the language with which their military advisers had agreed to the proposals of the Government had been very different to that of the Gentleman who had spoken in the House that afternoon. After all, they could only be guided by those who had the responsibility. They had followed them, he believed, not only in the main in the proposals they had made, but they had followed them, he believed, to the whole extent of the soldiers they were likely to obtain. ["Hear, hear!"] He had a few words to say as to the alternative proposal laid down by the right hon. Baronet. That proposal was a revival of the scheme which he submitted in great detail and admirably worked out some time ago. That scheme was that the recruits should be enrolled for three years at home and for nine or 18 years in India.

*SIR C. DILKE: I said nothing about 18 years to-night. I confined myself to that scheme as criticised by Lord Roberts. I accepted to-night the criticisms of Lord Roberts.

MR. BRODRICK said he did not want to hold the right hon. Baronet to anything but his present view. His present view was three years at home and nine years in India. Did that improve the condition of the Army at home? Would it improve the condition of the Army at home if, after a man had done three years' service at home, he was to have the alternative either of going into the Reserve or of going to India for nine years? Lord Roberts was a great authority, but there were some statistics which were perhaps even higher than Lord Roberts. Those were the statistics of the health of the Army in India during the closing years of long service. ["Hear, hear!"] Before the end of long service 65 per 1,000 of the Army of India were dying. The cost of India annually represented, as compared with the previous rate, the difference between 65 per 1,000 and 17 per 1,000. ["Hear, hear!"] If they could reduce the amount of life to the figures, the cost to India by this reckless expenditure of human life was calculated to amount to £1,000 per day, or £365,000 per year. There was not merely the question of health. There was also the question of efficiency. He believed it was held widely by other soldiers of eminence that nine years in India was too long a time to employ private soldiers without a change. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal was, after the 12 years' service to send the men back home. Was he going to pension them or would he turn them out at the age of 30 without a farthing except what was due to him as deferred pay? He did not know whether he took the question of pensions into his scheme or not, but the cost of that scheme would be something like £640,000 a year more than the present system of providing a good British Army with shorter service and an Indian Army, and would be, in his opinion, of most military authorities, far less efficient. That House had appointed committee and commission, one after another, to inquire into the needs of the Army. They had Lord Randolph Churchill's Committee, which considered the financial arrangements of the Army in 1887. They had the Duke of Devonshire's Commission in 1889, and they had the Wantage Committee in 1890. The Wantage Committee was specially charged with considering the terms and conditions of service in the Army, and he thought that, as that verdict had been challenged, they had some right to ask the House to abide by it. Lord Wantage's Committee said, not that the system had failed, but that the working of the system had been such that it had not had a fair chance. The House was now asked to improve the working of the system and to put that system into such a condition as Lord Wantage's Committee desired it should be in. The right hon. Gentleman had a scheme and the other hon. Gentlemen had their schemes. There might be a separate Indian Army or there might be a return to the long-service system, which, as Lord Wolseley had observed, would be like making water run up hill, but there was no scheme on which reliance could be placed with that certainty which could be relied on as to results, as was the case with the short service, and until a better system was produced, surely it must be said that short service held the field. ["Hear, hear!"] What had it given us? We had for the first time a force of 200,000 under pay in England by voluntary recruiting. He admitted that the first year recruits were too young; he admitted that the battalions at home were unfit to go abroad without reserves. If we could afford to pay a larger scale of pay we might secure recruits in competition with the ordinary labour market, but we could not do that; we could not hope to attract men who could earn 4s. a day at other labour, but at the same time those who knew our soldiers after two or three years' service allowed that there never was a time when the British Army was in a better and sounder condition, except as regards the first-year recruits. Under these circumstances he urged the House and every Member to read the evidence given before Lord Wantage's Committee, and to believe that they came to the conclusion that it was not the system that had failed, but that the working of the system required improvement. The hon. Member for Belfast (Mr.

Arnold-Forster) had written a letter to *The Times* in which he regretted to see the hon. Member spoke of a small section having had their fling and having done their level best to ruin the British Army. That section thus alluded to included nine Secretaries of State, four Adjutants-General, and two Commanders-in-Chief, of whom one was the most distinguished representative of the old school of military thought, and the second was the most prominent General of the new school. In asking the House to reject the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, he did so in favour of a system which had given us the best Army we had ever had, which had produced results which could not be surpassed by any system which could be suggested in place of it, and which, if the House would only give the extra regiments now proposed, would enable the system to have a fair trial, enabling line regiments to fulfil the part they were intended to bear, and carry out a well-conceived plan which, in the opinion of the highest authority, would secure the efficiency of our Army. [*Cheers.*]

Sir H. HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) said he had no intention of voting with the right hon. Baronet because, though there were some parts of his speech with which he thoroughly agreed, his own view was in accord with that of the Under Secretary. He had not had an opportunity of looking closely into the figures of the right hon. Baronet, and it was not of the slightest use to follow a comparison of the cost of foreign armies with the British Army. This matter had been discussed in the House, and had been well dealt with by the late Secretary for War. It was not possible to make the comparison, not only because of the fact that while on the Continent there was the system of conscription, and we had to go into the open market, but also because of the comfort and almost luxury of the position of the soldier in the British Army as compared with foreign armies. While the pay of the latter was about a halfpenny a day, our men received from 6 to 12 times that amount, and were lodged and maintained in a manner which in continental armies there was no attempt to approach, nor would he have that standard of comfort in the least diminished. In the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman with reference to artillery, and in his comparison of the number of guns required by the infantry, he forgot to mention that, of the total number of infantry, 250,000 were Volunteers, and that they had a fairly adequate amount of Volunteer artillery —some 280 guns, many well horsed; and the only reason why they had not a larger force of field artillery was that the military authorities did not think it desirable to institute Volunteer field batteries. But they had some seven or eight, and the number might be increased at any time if it should be thought desirable to make the increase. Of the specific proposals of the Government he thought they were excellent so far as they went, but he found fault with the Government for not proceeding further in the same direction. To the proposal so far as the Guards were concerned he objected, and he predicted that in a few years it would be revised. At first one or two battalions would be sent abroad, but soon the difficulties of recruiting would come in, and the scheme would have to be abandoned. He agreed with the Under Secretary as to the advantages of the short-service system, but the fault he found with the scheme was twofold—first, that it should not leave well alone and the Guards as they are; and, next, that it did not give the nine extra battalions all military reformers had been asking for during ten years past to make the short-service system work well. The question as it concerned the Guards would come up for subsequent discussion, but he was perfectly convinced that there would be no shadow of objection on the part of officers of the Guards to any scheme for the advantage of the service —their public spirit and *esprit de corps* would induce them to sacrifice all personal considerations to that end. The objection to that part of the scheme was that the opinion of the officers commanding the Guards had never been asked. They were surely the first people who ought to have been consulted. The defect of that scheme was that it was proposed to send three battalions of the Guards where both the popularity of their recruiting and their efficiency as trained soldiers must be diminished. One reason of the popularity of the Guards was that the soldiers, on the termination of their three years' service, had little difficulty in obtaining civilian employment. If they were sent abroad that would cease to be the case, and the popularity of recruiting for the Guards, and their efficiency also, to a certain degree, would be reduced. The men composing the Guards regiments were as fine as any in the whole world as regarded both drill and training, but they were going to be sent to a place the principal characteristics of which were, according to Lord Methuen, disease, heavy duty, and heavy drinking. The circumscribed space which they were to occupy must result in contributing to their inefficiency, whilst the way it was suggested to remedy that by making the terms of service shorter would not prove effective, and would add greatly to the expense. He was of opinion that short service had in the main been of substantial benefit. ["Hear, hear!"] The defect of the remarks of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean was that he had no remedy to propose. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if the present system was put in the melting-pot, was there a single person ready with any effective substitute for it. ["Hear, hear!"] He himself did not know of any such person. With the exception of the proposal relating to the Guards, he approved of the scheme of the Government, which he should support in the hope that this one step in the right direction would be followed up by further steps in succeeding years. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said he had not intended to take part in this discussion, as he had given expression to his views on many previous occasions. But, when he heard the right hon. Gentleman, speaking on behalf of the War Office, appeal to the fact that so many of his predecessors had taken the same view that was taken by the present Administration on that subject, he thought it only right that he should express his entire confirmation of that statement. ["Hear, hear!"] He would go a little further and say that, to his own knowledge, more than one Secretary of State had gone to the War Office strongly prejudiced against the present system, but when they became aware of the real internal difficulties of working such a complicated Army as theirs, they altered their opinions and accepted the present conditions. He would even go a little further, and say that soldier after soldier had gone to the War Office, and they also had found reason greatly to modify the opinions they had previously entertained, and he doubted very much whether they could find any soldier at the present day who had occupied a high responsible position connected with the Army who would endorse the view put before the House by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean. ["Hear, hear!"] He was quite aware that the right hon. Baronet had been able to quote the evidence of two very distinguished officers. But they were officers the whole of whose service had been passed in India, who had to do with the finished and manufactured article, and not with the manufacturing and finishing of it. They had no knowledge or experience of all the difficulties surrounding the question. There was one point he should like to urge upon those who had a conscious or unconscious inclination towards the system of long service—namely, that if the right hon. Baronet's Motion was good as against the present Government, it was good as against the whole series of Governments from Lord Cardwell's time down to this. ["Hear, hear!"] Why was short service introduced? It was introduced because the long service system had notoriously failed, and because the Recruiting Commission had produced evidence which could not be resisted, and which showed that they could not recruit the Army under the long-service system. It therefore came to be a question of short service or nothing. There was really no choice in the matter, and those who were responsible at the time had to face the necessity of altering the old long service pension system. ["Hear, hear!"] His right hon. Friend was not an upholder of long service; he wished a very short service for this country, but for the Indian and the colonial service he would still have a long term, with the consequence that had been already pointed out—that in addition to being an inefficient system it would be a costly and a cruel one. They would send the men out to India and keep them there until they either died or their constitutions were hopelessly damaged, and then bring back the remnants to this country to be pensioned and to eke out their wretched existence. They had this to be said for the present system—that, if illogical from many points of view, it suited their conditions, and what they endeavoured to do was to keep the men who went to India long enough for efficiency, yet sparing as much as possible expense to the Indian Government, while at the same time not keeping them so long as to do material damage to their constitution. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Baronet had quoted the evidence of Lord Wolseley, Sir Redvers Buller, and others before the Wantage Committee. Lord Wolseley was rather apt to make strong statements, and in some of his evidence he had made rather sweeping admissions as to the condition of the Army. But did Lord Wolseley, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Evelyn Wood, who had given that kind of evidence before the Wantage Committee, endorse the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman? Not one of them. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Baronet had quoted some words he had himself used with regard to the way in which they were hampered by traditions and local difficulties. He remembered the occasion and the matter of which he was then speaking, and he repeated it now. It was when the infantry was organised in double battalions and localised as it was now over the country; he did not hesitate to say that it would have been better to have formed larger regiments with more battalions, to have had smaller districts, and thus have saved a great deal of expense in barracks and staffs. ["Hear, hear!"] He appealed to anyone in the House what would have been done if the A-shire regiment had been sent to the B-shire district, or the colonel of the C-shire Militia had had to serve under the Commanding Officer of the D-shire district. [*Laughter.*] They were beset on all hands by county prejudices and jealousies, and by the traditions and susceptibilities of the regiments. There were enormous difficulties in dealing with the distribution of regiments of the Line. Take the case of the Cameron Highlanders. He made a feeble effort to dispose of it, because it was an utterly anomalous regiment. As a Scotchman his heart bled for it—[*laughter*]—and feeling was too strong against him. But now, the Government which the right hon. Gentleman represented had a great courage. Here was a single battalion which, according to the last return, was kept in a state of efficiency by 11 recruits drawn from its own district; and to get over the difficulty the happy thought had occurred to the Government to have two battalions and divide the 11 recruits between them. [*Laughter.*] This showed the difficulties met with when they attempted to do anything business-like in regard to the different regiments. He had already spoken of the system, and said all he need say about it. The question the House had to consider was whether the present system had worked thoroughly. He had listened with great pleasure, as he always did, to his hon. and gallant Friend who preceded him in this Debate, than whom there was no one with a wider knowledge of the Army or more qualified to advise the House on any military question. ["Hear, hear!"] His hon. and gallant Friend alluded to the excess of battalions out of the country. That was really the *crux* of the question. If we had had from the first a larger number of battalions in the country than serving abroad, or, in other words, had maintained the system as it was originally intended, none of the difficulties which had so far been discovered would have arisen. But what reason had they to believe that the excess of battalions abroad would be permanent? That had always been the difficulty. He had had this responsibility himself, and he had never felt quite certain he was justified in coming to the House of Commons for a large additional sum for the Army on the ground of the excess of battalions abroad, because he was not certain what change of policy might not create an inequality without any other mode of interference. He believed we had 52 battalions of the Line in India. Would it not be possible to bring home two or three of those battalions? He was not aware that there was a serious objection to a step of this sort being taken. Then he came to a difficulty to which he felt bound to allude, and which had really had a good deal to do with this question. Of late years, greatly to the public advantage, the Army and Navy had been brought together on the question of the defence of the country. They had heard each others' views, and now the whole system of national defence was arranged on full consideration of the views of the two services. He ventured to hope that both services were perfectly fair and reasonable in the matter. But the distinguished officers at the head of the Navy declared that they would not be responsible for conveying any reinforcements to any of our foreign stations after a declaration of war. This statement had been made authoritatively and it was accepted as gospel. But he was not aware that there was anything in it which should make it like one of the postulates of Euclid that people should accept as beyond contradiction. What did it mean? He was not aware that that claim on the part of the Navy had ever been made before. But now the theory was that the Navy was to have the supreme command of the seas. If this doctrine were put forward by a weak Navy he could well understand it. But it was put forward by a strong Navy, and if it were not strong enough let them strengthen it. But it seemed to him to make a considerable claim on the intelligence of the ordinary outsider merely to say it was impossible for it to convey troops to Gibraltar or Malta after a declaration of war.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I never said that.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said it might be right or it might be wrong. He pointed out the great influence that it had. What was the consequence? We had seven battalions of infantry at Malta treading on each others heels, deteriorating day by day in many respects. They were not in a suitable place for a part of our mobile forces. He tried when in office to get one or two away, but he was immediately extinguished when any proposal of the kind was made. He was told it was a scandalous thing, that the infantry garrison at Malta was not large enough at the present moment, and the War Office ought to send more men there. That was a state of things not in itself desirable. Malta was nothing but a Navy base. The Army had no use for Malta; yet all its best infantry battalions in piping times of peace were kept there year after year deteriorating under their eyes, and they were told there was no help for it. The same thing applied *mutatis mutandis* to Gibraltar. He was merely showing how many considerations must be taken into account. He did not venture, after his past experience, to contradict the theory to which he had alluded as a postulate to be accepted. It might be right or not. He pointed out the consequences, and if it could be got over, the equalisation of battalions was pretty well accomplished. The proposal they had heard with regard to the Guards was *terra incognita.* It had not been explained, so he should reserve what he had to say about it. But he had thought it desirable in connection with this question of the Army system and its administration to make these few plain observations upon the evils and possibilities of cure which attach to the present state of things. Holding strongly the view that our present Army system, although it was easy to find fault with it, could not be replaced by any other which would not have ten times more evils or which would at all come near it in meeting the various requirements of the Service, he need hardly say he should support the Government. [*Cheers.*]

*MR. ARTHUR BRROKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) said that although the Motion of the right hon. Member for Dean Forest was practically a vote of censure on the Government, it would be recognised in every part of the House that the motive was a most creditable one and only sprang from a desire, shared in a large degree on the Ministerial side of the House, to direct general attention to the present serious condition of the Army. Nothing the right hon. Baronet had said had so heartily enlisted his own approval as his observation that the public would have backed up the Government in making much more thorough and carefully elaborated proposals than they had done. He was not by nature a democrat, but he thoroughly believed in the policy of completely trusting those from whom you wanted extensive favours, and he thought that in the case of naval policy the public had shown an absolute willingness to vote any sum of money provided it had some guarantee that it would have commensurate results in return. It was no new discovery that our military system was excessively expensive. The Wantage Committee, so often referred to, contained references to the fact that the efficient maintenance of our military establishments and the defence of our positions at home and abroad, must always, under any system of voluntary enlistment, be a matter of great difficulty. The voluntary system was more responsible than anything else for the excessive cost of the Army, and though the right hon. Baronet tried to minimise that objection, his arguments did not disturb the central fact that a soldier who was paid under the voluntary system had to be more highly paid. In his opinion there were many people in this country who held extravagantly optimistic views with regard to the Navy. They talked about the sister service exactly like the French used to talk of their Army just before the events of 1870. The cause of those views being held with regard to our Navy was to be found in the fact that so many of our military critics were fond of depreciating our Army and of always looking at its seamy side, both in public and in private. He did not think that either the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, nor his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Essex, were quite fair in the statements they had made with regard to some features of our Army. It had already been pointed out that evening that our Army occupied a most difficult position, and had more anomalous duties to perform than that of any other nation. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman did not give sufficient credit to the Reserve, which formed a most important feature in our short system. He, however, entirely sympathised in the complaint that the Reserve men were not adequately trained, and that great difficulty was created by employers objecting to the Reserve men in their employment being called out for annual training. If this difficulty cropped up too frequently that House would have to deal with such employers, who could not be allowed to sacrifice the Army for their own interests. As a general rule, the Reserve men had responded admirably when they had been called out. Thus, in 1878, out of, in round numbers, 14,000 men summoned, 13,000 had come back to the colours. In 1882, out of 11,600 men summoned, 11,000 had responded to the call; and from the figures which had been set forth that night the same thing had occurred in 1885. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Essex, and certain other military critics, were in the habit of ridiculing the physique of our young soldiers. It was a fact, however, that our minimum standard of height was considerably above that of foreign armies. Putting aside the exceptional standard of the Guards, he might remind the House that the minimum standard of height in the Line was 5 feet 4 inches, as against the minimum standard of 5 feet in the German army, which actually had in the ranks of their line battalions soldiers who stood "5 feet nothing." He had had the honour of serving for some years in India, and he had seen our magnificent battalions there in their full war strength, who were constantly being moved out of their cantonments at a moment's notice, and it was impossible not to be deeply impressed with their warlike efficiency, which could hardly be surpassed. He should recommend our military critics to visit India and to look at those battalions for themselves, because he was satisfied that if they did so we should hear a great deal less said in depreciation of our Army as a whole. His right hon. Friend had said but little about the possible invasion of this country; and it had been suggested that the proposals for the fortification of London did not enter into the serious military policy of our defence, but were rather devices to lull the fears of the uninformed multitude. He feared that the military authorities were really placing absolute reliance for the security of the country against invasion upon the Navy alone. With regard to the difficulty arising out of our linked battalion system, he thought that when, by any accident, two of the linked battalions were sent abroad at the same time, the third battalion, in other words, the Militia, should be embodied, in order to feed the other two. If in the present instance 11 militia battalions had been permanently embodied, it would have had rather a striking effect upon the people of this country. He thought that that experiment might fairly be tried. He also agreed with the suggestion of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Essex that, in order to give some outlet for local patriotic feeling, a regiment might be localised in each of our more important dependencies, such as Canada and Australia. As to the proposals of the Government generally, he repeated that the public would have been prepared for something much more sweeping and involving much greater cost if it had only been explained to them that it was necessary. Nevertheless, he trusted that the Government, having once decided upon a scheme, would thoroughly persevere with it, and would not, like their predecessors in office, allow themselves to be led away by social influences. With regard to a second battalion for the Cameron Highlanders, he should have liked to have heard that the wish of Lord Cardwell, to the effect that a superior class of young men should be attracted to the Army, had been fulfilled. He commented on the absence in these proposals of any definite plan for sending small expeditions out of the country in cases of emergency. The Guards would have been a specially serviceable body for this purpose, and he could understand that to send them to do duty in a fortress in time of peace might have a very injurious effect on their recruiting. He would not discuss the additions to the Army, which were really microscopic, any further, except to express the hope that the field battery might at least consist of six guns and not four. The issue raised by the right hon. Baronet was, of course, one of want of confidence. If that Motion were carried, and the Government defeated, did he (the right hon. Baronet) desire to return to the torpid sway of the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War? and did he think that would advance the objects which he, in common with the right hon. Baronet, had at heart? It was useless to contend that our military position and the military administration of this country were absolutely satisfactory, but he was not prepared to interrupt and terminate by a vote of censure the first important step taken for many years to improve the efficiency of the Army.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said there was very considerable difficulty in properly discussing these military proposals. The first thing the House required to be convinced of was whether the money provided would do the work that the Army had to do; but before they could say what the Army had to do they must first decide whether the country was safe from invasion. That was a question which could not be decided by the Military Authorities at all, but was a Naval question, involving also the question of transport and the Mercantile Marine of this and other countries. If he were to attempt to discuss that question on the Army Estimates he would no doubt be told by the Speaker that this was a question which should be discussed on the Navy Estimates. But he wished to point out that the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman), a late Minister responsible for the War Department, had said that the number of battalions at Malta might be reduced. The root of the whole question of the inequality between the foreign service battalions and the home service battalions rested upon the answer to the question: What was the number of battalions that it was necessary to have in garrisons abroad? He entirely agreed with Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman that we had too many battalions at Malta. His opinion of the difficulties and the cause of the failure of the military system was that they arose from the fact that we had never actually defined, and no Minister in the House had been in a position to say, given our supremacy at sea, what are our military requirements? He would require a distinct statement how far naval supremacy affected our military policy. The steady absorption of our Army into garrison service he regarded as a great danger, and considered that the result obtained was not at all in proportion to the expense to which we were put by such a system. He understood that the increase of the garrison battalions was the result of the recommendation of the Colonial Committee, but he asked if the Authorities of the War Office were going to produce to the House the recommendations and Report of that Committee? It was a curious fact that the proposals now made by the Government were exactly the reverse to the proposals made before the short service system was introduced, when, in 1870, as preliminary to the reform in the Army, they took away one battalion of the West Indian Regiment, and abolished the Canadian Rifles and the Ceylon Corps, and turned Garrison Artillery into Field Artillery. Now another preliminary reform in 1870 was a reduction in the fleet, when it was announced, amidst the cheers of the House, that the Navy Estimates were lower than they had been for many years; therefore, the difficulty he found in discussing the Army Estimates was that of having clearly in their minds what the Statesmen guiding the defences of the Empire really thought of the military necessities. Evidently the tendency was that the stronger the fleet became the more they should lock up the Army; but, in his opinion, the stronger the fleet the freer should be the Army. His own conviction was that they were overdoing the cost and the number of men provided for the sedentary duties of the Army. If they took the case of Malta, all the troops in Europe crammed into Malta would not prolong its existence under the British flag for one hour when our naval supremacy had ceased; while, if we exercised a dominating influence at sea, how was it possible for any great sea expedition to come down and attack Malta? Therefore, the real cause of complaint in regard to the little apparent result they got from the Army was that they did not face fairly the question of what our Army was for, and what were its necessary functions. He found that for garrison service, and service in defensive positions alone, they absorbed 372,123 men at a cost of nearly five and three-quarter millions, while the field Army, which was the real Army, cost only just five millions, and absorbed only 112,000 men. He did not think such a system was satisfactory, or that the country was getting value for its money. Our Navy was really the defensive arm of the country, and so long as it fulfilled its duty offensive expeditions over the sea by foreign military force were impossible. He wished to draw attention to this fact. There was a statement made by the War Minister that such and such things were going to be done on the recommendation of the Colonial Committee. Was the right hon. Gentleman going to produce the Report of that Committee? Because this question and the Guards, and, indeed, all these questions resolved themselves into this, What was it that determined the necessity for strengthening the garrisons abroad? If it was proposed to keep so many battalions at Malta—the very flower of the Army with the colours outside India—surely the House had a right to know what were the broad grounds on which it was proposed to keep seven battalions locked up at Malta? In this matter he did not consider himself tied by any Party obligations. ["Hear, hear!"] He felt himself bound to vote on matters affecting the national defence according to his own lights and judgment; and, unless before the Debate closed he could get some satisfactory statement from the Front Bench as to what were the real circumstances that led to increasing the strength of these garrisons, and unless he had some clear statement as to why it was, with the naval supremacy in their hands, the Government could contemplate for a moment a large hostile force coming across the sea to attack them, he was bound to say he should vote for the Motion, because he did not think the Government were fulfilling the requirements of the country. He felt this very strongly when he looked at the general position abroad, and remembered that if the supremacy at sea was real, the main military question simply resolved itself into a question—apart from India—of offence. The naval base must be secured from the cruiser attacks of which the Duke of Devonshire spoke, but he could not see that seven battalions were wanted at Malta, besides an enormous force of artillery, engineers, and sub-marine mines, to resist cruiser attacks. If the fleet was sufficient, any organised attack on British possessions abroad was impossible. ["Hear, hear!"] Why, then, were the Government locking up the flower of the Army in these garrisons? Unless he could get some more satisfactory statement as to the reasons and grounds for all this enormous accumulation of force and all this enormous expenditure on garrison service, he should feel bound to give his vote for the Motion, not so much on the question of enlistment or terms of service, as upon the primary question of military policy. He trusted the House would have some satisfactory explanation. It was no good for the Under Secretary to get up and say that the military authorities feared invasion, because the highest military authority at his back had the most extraordinary notions on the subject, namely, that the Army must be looked to because the fleet might disappear in a night. The point on which he wanted a clear and explicit answer was this, had the military policy in regard to these preparations for great military attacks been settled, not by the military authorities, but by the most serious consideration of the possibility of an enormous military force parading about the sea to attack our possessions, while we held the supremacy of the sea! On the answer the right hon. Gentleman was able to give to that question certainly depended into which Lobby he should go. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. BRODRICK said the question which his hon. Friend had asked was one scarcely coming within the scope of the Motion. The Secretary of State had quoted the opinion of the Colonial Defence Committee and the other authorities which had influenced the opinion of the Government on the probable points of attack and the force that ought to be maintained. Those recommendations had been put before the House on the responsibility of the Government, who, of course, had carefully considered both the naval and military effects that might be produced. The hon. Gentleman might rest assured that if the Government came to the House and asked for what they considered the needs of the national defences, it was after considering the whole naval and military requirements of the nation.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, after the usual interval,

*GENERAL McCALMONT (Antrim, N.) pointed out that our voluntary system of enlistment gave every man in England a freedom which was absolutely priceless, and although he did not deny that our Army was expensive, the reason lay in that fact. As long as the voluntary system existed, we would undoubtedly have to pay the price of freedom for it. Every miltary man would like to see the system advocated by the right hon. Baronet, but there was great objection to it, and that was the objection of pensions which it would entail. It was an ideal system, but he did not think it could be introduced now. We had adopted another system, that of linked battalions. That system was the very best that could be devised at the time it was brought forward, but from the day of its conception until now, it had never had the slightest chance of success, owing to the action of various administrative Governments. He read several extracts from Memorandum of General MacDougall's Committee's Report on Details of Army Organisation, to show that essential recommendations had never been carried out. It was quite impossible that system could go on under the circumstances. We had now 76 battalions abroad and 65 at home. The fact was, that to work the system properly we required a margin over and above the reliefs of six battalions attached to the First Army Corps. He could not understand how the Under Secretary for War proposed on any ground whatever to carry out the linked battalion system, unless he had, at any rate, an equal number abroad and at home. The proposal of the Government, put it any way they liked, left us in a minority of four. He could not understand the attitude of the Government. He was a representative belonging to the Conservative Party. He had been wont to go down to the constituencies and denounce the Party opposite, declaring that when the Conservatives came into power they would do something for the Army, and would put it on a proper footing. He was bound to say, as a military man, and, he must humbly add, one who had had considerable experience, he regarded the proposals of the Government as absolutely contemptible and paltry. If ever we wanted an addition to the Army it was now, because the territory of the Empire had grown in a prodigious way. We had annexed Cyprus and the Transvaal, though we afterwards gave the latter back to the Boers, which hon. Members opposite would say was the right thing to do! But we had since added Bechuanaland and Rhodesia to our South African dependencies. They could not call it a temporary expedient to send out four battalions to South Africa. The Under Secretary looked to get two battalions back from South Africa. In his opinion they would probably have to send out 10 more battalions there. We should have to keep our troops in South Africa, or else he was entirely wrong in his prognostications. Turn to Egypt. We had several battalions there. Was that looked upon as a temporary measure. Here we were with a deficiency of at least 11 battalions, and all this was due to the fact that successive Governments had never done anything to carry out the most essential points of General McDougall's Committee's recommendations. The increase of the Depôt organisations to meet emergencies had been quietly ignored. Nobody knew what chaos reigned at present from one battalion preying upon another. In consequence, no one knew that except the regimental officers of the British Army, and they had no means of expressing their view of the facts in this House; but, having commanded a British regiment, he could vouch for the fact. For two or three years, while he commanded that regiment, when he objected to the system carried on he was told by the Adjutant General that, according to the plan, the regiment was for the time being useless. That was a contemptible position to put any colonel in. What did the Government do? They came down and asked the House of Commons for two battalions to the Guards, and claimed, by a process of arithmetic, that in so doing they were adding six battalions to the Army. They were doing nothing of the kind. As a matter of exchange they were adding six battalions to the Line, but merely adding three battalions to the Army. For the Government to come down with a miserable £5 note proposal of that kind—he said it was a contemptible thing for any Government to do. He was extremely sorry to have to go so far as to say that. One of the greatest difficulties they had to contend with was that they could only get a diluted opinion as regards the military advisers of the Crown. At the present time they had the Commander-in-Chief, the Quartermaster General, the Adjutant General, and the Commander of the Forces in Ireland. He did not suppose that any Government in modern times had had the advantage of more skilled advice, or officers more experienced in war, than those four officers. What he would like to have would be the concrete opinion of those general officers, or else the individual opinion of any one of those officers on the proposals before the House. Everyone who had served in the Army as long as he had must feel that some of the remarks of the Under Secretary could hardly represent the opinions of the military advisers of the War Office. Those opinions must have been whittled down, so that the force had been altogether destroyed, to trim with political exigencies. They had to cut their coat according to their cloth, and that cloth was served out to them by a set of clerks in Pall Mall who did not know the requirements of the service. This great Empire would some day meet with an unparalleled catastrophe if these methods were persisted in. The service Members were supposed to swallow anything offered to them, but he was not prepared to swallow some of the proposals of the Government; and he said this from a strong conviction that the Army was not up to the requirements of the Empire. He saw it was proposed to add some 400 horses to the cavalry; but if our cavalry were to be put in a state even relatively equal to that of France and Germany, 2,000, even 4,000, rather than 400, more horses would be needed. At the same time, the Government must be thanked for the proposal, because they were the first Government in the last 20 years who had added a single cavalry horse. The ideal cavalry organisation of France and Germany was four squadrons to the regiment and 24 squadrons to the division, while we were content with three squadrons to the regiment and 18 to the division. It would be well to follow the standard of Powers which had had so much reason to study the matter, and which had at present such magnificent cavalry divisions. If he had expressed himself more warmly than he intended, it was simply in the interests of the service which he had so much at heart. ["Hear, hear!"]

Sir EDWARD GOURLEY (Sunderland) said the system under which enlistment was now conducted in the Army, as far as foreign service was concerned, was the best system for the country. The men who were trained in service abroad returned eminently fitted to make a good reserve. In advocating a return to the long service system, it had been forgotten that Lord Cardwell's system of depôt centres had never yet had a fair trial. The idea of that system was, that all the arms of the service should be so brought together that they worked, not as units, but as a whole. Further, these depôt centres were to be made stores, where everything would be found necessary for the troops ordered on active service. But the money—£3,500,000—voted by Parliament for establishing this system was spent for quite different purposes. A great proportion of it went to build barracks. The time had come when the War Office should take this scheme into consideration. If war were to break out to-morrow we should find ourselves in the same position as we did at the outbreak of the Crimean War and during the Abyssinian campaign. To send an army corps into the field would cause considerable confusion. What we wanted was some organisation which would give us a better preparation for actual war. The late Secretary of State for War had that evening declared that the naval authorities declined to be responsible for the movement of the garrisons in the Mediterranean. That was a very serious state of things. He thought that, under the new Committee of the Cabinet, something like co-operation of the services had been brought about; and he hoped that reasonable and sensible co-operation would be insisted on. Manœuvres ought to be conducted, not by the Army alone, but by the two services in co-operation. There should, for instance, be exercise in the embarkation and disembarkation of troops and stores. It was essential that the forces should be employed in times of peace at such work as would be required of them when actively engaged in war. He also considered that we were not getting money's worth for what we were spending on the Army. When his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury was an independent Member he was always laying before the House evidence of military extravagance. He remembered that on one accasion his hon. Friend showed that the cost per head of our Army was three times more than the cost per head of the Army of any other country. The total cost of an English soldier was £130 a year. The greater portion of that cost was due to extravagance in organisation and administration, and that therefore was a branch of the service in which economy was badly needed.

Colonel SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said he did not agree with the conclusions of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, when he advocated two Armies, enlisted under different terms of service, for home and India. Such a scheme was not likely to be beneficial either to the Army or to the military needs of the country. But, on the other hand, the proposal of the Government did not appear to him to meet the requirements of the service. They were no doubt a step in advance, and as such they would be welcomed; but what was required was not so much what he should call, with great respect, a patching-up of the present system, as the remodelling of that system on a working basis. The right hon. Baronet had quoted the opinion of the Adjutant General, who had said that there was not a battalion of the Line in this country at the present time that was ready for war. It was popularly supposed that our battalions were ready for war at any moment. But if it were otherwise, it was not the battalions but the system that was to blame, and it was the duty of Members of the House, as the representatives of the electorate of the country, to find out where the defect lay, and to suggest an adequate remedy. Personally, having had forty years' practical experience of military life, and therefore having some knowledge of the subject, he thought the two questions of linked battalions and short service should not be mixed up together, but should be considered separately. At present, military opinon was not strongly against short service. Under that system we escaped the great number of pensions which lay at the end of long service, and besides, the term of service was being gradually extended. But the linked battalion system had never appeared to him to be a good scheme. It was like an Army working in fetters. He had always held that it was not right to sacrifice the efficiency of one battalion in order to feed another, and keep up the system of linking. It was intended under that system to have at home precisely the same number of battalions as were abroad. But if it became necessary to maintain permanently abroad a number of battalions in excess of the number at home—say, in the case of a European war—what, then, would become of the linked battalion system? The system was based on the idea that an even balance should be preserved between the two linked battalions—the one at home and the other abroad—but it was conceivable that in certain eventualities that balance might be disturbed. What should be done was that the links should be severed, the battalions should be set free, as before, and restored to their old numbers; that the depot system should be made a reality; that each battalion should have two strong companies at the depot to feed the battalion at home or abroad, and with a framework ready so that it could be extended when necessary into a fresh battalion. He was sorry it was proposed to add only one battery to the Field Artillery. It was a service that took a long time to train; there was none that could be extemporised less quickly in the field, and none it was more essential to keep at all times up to its full strength and efficiency. Therefore, while willing to accept the proposals of the Government, he did not think they were complete or efficient. There was one other point to which he wished to refer, and that was the responsibility for military policy. They had had a short statement from the Under Secretary with regard to Army matters, but which he thought the House and the country would like—

*MR. SPEAKER: That hardly arises upon this Amendment.

COLONEL SANDYS said he would, therefore, only add, in conclusion, that the conditions which were proposed in the present instance appeared to him hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of the service. Hon. Members were willing to accept them at the present time, but he trusted the time would soon come when the Government would see fit to accede to the wishes of the House and go more fully into the requirements of the Army.

*CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) said it was with great diffidence that he rose to make a few remarks on the proposal now before the House, and his diffidence was increased by the statement of the late Secretary for War that until they had sufficient knowledge of an official character upon the question it was really impossible to express an opinion. He was, however, somewhat strengthened in appearing before the House when he remembered that the same right hon. Gentleman had said that the cost of the Army was appalling, and was at present increased by prejudices and traditions which it was almost hopeless to overcome. He for one did not give up hope entirely, and he trusted that the other military Members of the House, who were almost all of one mind on certain points, would not give up hope until the country knew the real facts of the case. The Under Secretary for War, in his very able statement, said, in direct contradiction to what the Secretary for War stated in another place, that the state of the Army was quite satisfactory up to a certain extent—that we had succeeded wherever we had gone in our wars. He had always held that the British Army was good, but he did not think that was quite the question before the House. The question was, was it as good as it might be? Was it as good as this great nation had a right to demand? He did not think that any answer could be given to that question except in the negative. He did not think it was right to say, as the late Secretary for War said, that the present Commander-in-Chief had a very large field of expression. He thought that when a man like Lord Wolseley gave utterance to the words that the Reserve was a sham, those words ought to be received with great respect and attention. He had had some slight personal knowledge of those distinguished officers, Sir Evelyn Wood and Sir Redvers Buller—the latter of whom was better known by the very determined way in which he expressed himself—and he did not think that anything but absolute truth could be attached to any evidence they might give before a Committee. But the principal object for which he rose was to refer to the words in the Motion, viz., "dealing with the present system of enlistment." That was a matter which he had the honour to bring before the House on the Estimates last year. He was convinced that, whatever might be said about systems and about the different ways of managing the Army, until they went to the very root of the question, until they dealt with the actual material of which the Army was composed, the sources from which that material was derived, and the way in which it was derived, they must be beating the air. That was the very root of the question, and until they looked at the way in which they got their recruits, and the time of getting them, they would never attain the ends which they had all in view, viz., that the country should get its money's worth for the money which it spent on the Army. It was wise to see what foreign countries were doing in this respect. Most foreign countries enlisted men at the age of 20 or 21, and only one European country enlisted at the age of 19. But the normal age of enlistment in this country was 18, and practically general officers were allowed to accept recruits at the age of 17, and it was a well-known fact that recruits were taken even at much lower ages. Those recruits were merely undeveloped boys; their minds and their characters were not those of men, and yet they were expected to do the work of men, and to resist the temptations of men. In 1894, in order to get 37,000 recruits no less than 62,000 candidates were examined, and, therefore, 25,000, or over 40 per cent. of all the applicants, were rejected. That to his mind showed that the class from which recruits were drawn was almost entirely composed of the lowest of the community, especially in view of the small requirements of the Army recruiting departments. He thought that if we could organise our Army on the real lines that we ought to do, we would obtain a better class of men. We expected a great deal more from our soldiers than we did a very short time ago. He held that as long as we continued to take our recruits at anything under 20 into the battalions in which they were expected to serve, they could not, from the force of circumstances, do the work nor acquire the knowledge expected of them. Perhaps the most serious aspect of this matter was the nation's responsibility as regarded the individual units who were persuaded into joining the Army. Until they altered the present conditions under which the men, instead of leaving the Army better than when they entered it, left it worse, they would never get the parents of boys anxious to send their sons into the Army. The same rule ought to apply to the non-commissioned ranks as to the commissioned. There was an unparalleled anxiety to get into the latter, and if the Army was treated on logical lines, by making it sufficiently attractive to the rank and file, there would be the same competition to enter the ranks of the Army as there now is to obtain a commission. Another point he desired to refer to was the terrible state of the health of the Army, and it made the responsibility all the greater when they thought of the comparative youth of those who were invalided while their service was going on.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the health of the Army is a subject outside this Motion.

*CAPTAIN PIRIE said he was merely going to prove that the enlistment suffered in consequence of the neglected state of health of the soldiers. He could only say that when a man left the Army he was often worse than when he went into it. He left it, in many cases, a beer-drinker, and that was one of the greatest detriments to a man obtaining employment when he left the service. He did not deny that a great improvement had taken place as regarded the question of temperance, but there was great room for further improvement. As remedies for meeting the present difficulty, he suggested that our tropical and semi-tropical coaling stations should be placed under the Admiralty, which would relieve many of the battalions now in garrison there. Then, also, with regard to our smaller Crown colonies, he thought their efficiency might be maintained with much smaller staffs of officers. At some of the stations the staffs were ridiculously large. Thus, for example, at Bermuda, ten staff officers, nearly all of the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, are maintained for the control of a force less numerous than a single German regiment—and this, of course, not including regimental officers. The time had come when those anomalies should be remedied. Twenty-five years ago Yokohama was garrisoned by marines, and the experiment was proved to be an unqualified success. The Secretary of State for War stated that those stations absorbed no fewer than 18 battalions; but if the coaling stations were placed under the Admiralty, and garrisoned, if only partially, by marines, many battalions would be relieved. He could not understand there being any objection on the part of the Navy to undertake the work. ["Hear, hear!"] Another method by which he would seek to change the present unsatisfactory system would be not to admit any recruit into a battalion until he was 20 years of age, but if it was necessary to enlist recruits at a lower age, then they ought to be placed first of all in training establishments, similarly to training commissioned officers at Woolwich and Sandhurst. As long as recruiting at the present age went on, he held that satisfactory results could never be obtained. [" Hear, hear ! "] The Under Secretary for War seemed to refute the idea that men could be got to enlist under present conditions for long service, but the right hon. Gentleman had forgotten that it was the object of the authorities to throw every obstacle in the way of the men, to prevent them from enlisting for long terms. He believed also that the pernicious system of deferred pay had done more harm to the Army than anything else, and it was one of the first things he would abolish in the present system. They could not expect finality in the matter, however, until the Army was so reformed and the soldier so treated that he would be made to feel that the greatest punishment that could be awarded him was to be dismissed from the service, and until there was as great competition to serve in the rank and file as there was in the commissioned ranks. [" Hear, hear ! "]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.), while not wishing to interfere with the Debate, ventured to point out that there was another Amendment following on the Paper which raised a question of very great interest, which deserved to be debated, and on which the public would desire to have some information. He alluded to the subject of the additions to the Guards. [" Hear, hear ! "] He therefore thought it would be for the general convenience of the House that the present Debate should be brought to a close with or without a Division, so that the other subject might be considered. When his right hon. Friend the Under Secretary made his statement on Friday there would be every opportunity of discussing the general question. [" Hear, hear ! "]

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said he felt bound to make a few remarks on the matters under consideration that night, as he understood that on Friday an Amendment would be moved for a reduction in the number of men, which would have the effect of preventing any hon. Member from dealing with the subjects which were now before the House. The two front Benches were agreed on the present policy adopted in regard to the Army; they had similarly agreed before, and the result of such agreement had always been the breakdown and failure of our Army organisation. [" Hear, hear ! "] Until this system was changed the British Army would never make any progress. The system was contrary to common sense. It was a crazy system which could never produce any satisfactory results. The plan of linked battalions supposed that two battalions formed one unit, but only by accident had the two battalions of one regiment ever been quartered together. They generally met each other in the Suez Canal. There never would be regimental solidarity with one battalion at home and the other abroad. The depôt system for recruits had undoubtedly been a failure; to those brick buildings scattered all over the country were sent recruits and some old veterans who were employed there in cleaning pots and pans, looking after vegetables, and doing other military duties of that kind. [*Laughter.*] Another batch of recruits would go to the home battalion. Was it credible that this could be a wise system? The whole staff of officers of the home battalion had practically not to learn military duties, but to play the part of masters of schools and of drill-masters to the recruits. When the men thus under training began to know their masters and to become soldiers they were sent away to another battalion. Let the House look at the contrary effect of the system pursued in regard to the Royal Marines. The recruits for this force were sent to large depôts and kept there for nine months. They were then turned out the best drilled soldiers in the world—[*cheers*]—and sent straight to the various divisions. To make any comparison between the line battalions at home and the Royal Marines, either at home or abroad, was perfectly idle and absurd. [" Hear, hear ! "] It had been urged that there should be a system of short service for the Army at home and of long service for the troops abroad. The system of short service—the term of three years—had been tried at home in the Brigade of Guards, and it had succeeded after the long term of seven years had failed.

They had a long service in the Royal Marines, and there they had, side by side, a three years' service and a 12 years' service, both producing admirable results. Between those two they had a seven, or eight, or six years' service, which they pretended was a short-service system, and which was an absolute failure. ["Hear, hear!"] Their practice in the matter was contrary to common sense. They expected to get good soldiers and plenty of them, and yet they told every man or boy on enlisting that they would keep him for six years and then turn him adrift a ruined man, unless he got aid from some charitable institution, to which he must go and beg the right to live. ["Hear, hear!"] He defied anyone to suggest that that sort of system could attract the right class of men. He asked any hon. Gentleman to tell him of one single instance since the short-service system started of any battalion in the British Service—except the Guards or on the Indian Establishment—that had paraded on its war strength in war. As a matter of fact, their Commander-in-Chief, or others, had selected their battalions. ["Hear, hear!"] They picked and chose and filled up their battalions with the best men they could get from here and there. A war would test this system, and they would then see whether they were dealing in realities or not. It was said that these men were very fine fellows. So they were. Those who survived the perils and temptations of Indian life grew up to be fine soldiers; but they came back here to be ruined and to go into the workhouses. Only last Session he asked that these men might receive a little more consideration at the hands of the Government—men who were discharged into the workhouses by scores and hundreds. [*Ministerial cries of* "No."] He hoped he should have an occasion of proving that statement. He was told that a great number of these men had been employed by the railway companies, but that the railway companies found they were not the proper class of men, and it was not fair to press them to take a class of men whom they really could not make use of. Was that the necessary consequence of serving Her Majesty? Not a bit of it. They got men discharged from the Marines by hundreds and from the Navy by thousands, and everybody was glad to get their service. But they got those men whose careers had been broken by this Army service discharge, and they came out as they went in—very little better, and sometimes, perhaps, a little worse. He claimed that the failure of the system, which was now undoubted, was the natural and inevitable consequence of the system; and he trusted the House would not be misled by the rosy statements they heard sometimes. They must discount and discount the legitimate and splendid pride their officers took in the units they commanded, and they must go and see for themselves what these battalions were. He did not care where hon. Members went, they would find the same miserable, tedious sham going on of these battalions being treated as depôts for other battalions. ["Hear, hear!"] What he believed they wanted was a recasting of the system on some common-sense lines. ["Hear, hear!"] They wanted to do away with this plan of making one battalion depôt for another—a plan never heard of in any land except this or fairyland. He wanted to see the men transferred, when they were properly trained, to the regiments in which they were to serve. They wanted to see their superior officers really occupied in doing the work which they entered the Army to do, and not doing the work which, as a matter of fact, was being done by non-commissioned officers in the depôt. They were burning the candle at both ends, for they were preventing the right men going in, because they did not allow them to go in under conditions which good men would be content to accept. For these reasons he would support the Motion of the right hon. Baronet.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead) desired to challenge the statement of the Under Secretary for War that the 200 guns belonging to the Artillery Volunteers were perfectly mobile and could be used in case of an invasion. Those guns—and he dared say the right hon. Gentleman was aware of the fact—were absolutely useless, for they were obsolete. There was not a Volunteer company in the country that had got breech-loading field pieces, while the battalions on the coast had only muzzle-loaders. He would like to know why the right hon. Gentleman said that these

200 guns could be used in case of invasion, and were perfectly mobile. He did not object to the proposed expenditure. Far from it, but with this expenditure the artillery of the Volunteers should be put on a proper basis. He happened to be an old Volunteer officer, and remembered that the guns were and remained now, he believed, all muzzle loaders. What was the use of these? Those were not the best weapons with which to resist an invasion. He would go further in reference to the expenditure upon artillery, and deny that the best weapons were given to the Royal Artillery. They might brag of the efficiency of batteries and horses, but the weapons were old. The breech mechanism of the field pieces was old, it had the side swing and not the proper drop action for quick-firing. Why spend money on the obsolete mechanism? He merely directed the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to these facts. It was all very well to come to the House and ask for money, and the right hon. Gentleman was only doing his duty in that, but the money would not be wisely spent unless it armed the British Army with the best weapons. The Royal Artillery could not compete with continental artillery, simply because the weapons were not of the modern type. The quick firing of the French and German artillery could beat ours, to use a common expression "into fits." He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be practical in this matter. It was his duty as Minister of the Crown, and not only a duty he owed to his colleagues but to the nation, that, before asking for money he should show it was for supplying the best article he could get.

*Colonel WELBY (Taunton) felt an apology was due to the House, and he hoped Members would bear with him while he called attention to a matter which would not be in order on later Amendments. The Under Secretary had reproached the right hon. Baronet who moved this Resolution with not having provided any solution of the difficulties which he had placed before the House, and the taunt had been repeated by hon. Members who had followed. But it seemed to him, if the right hon. Gentleman established his point, if he had shown that the state of the Army at the present time was unsatisfactory, that it was inefficient and required to be reorganised, then he had done all that could be expected from a civilian Member of the House, the solution of the difficulties resting with the paid officers of the Crown. ["Hear, hear!"] It was not for a civilian Member of the House to offer the solution of these difficulties. He asked the patience of the House because he believed that to a certain extent he could suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary some lines upon which he could amend the future organisation of our Army. No doubt our Army presented a most complex problem. We had to provide for home defence, for the possibility of landing a large force on the continent, for our Indian Army, and for the garrisons of our colonial and foreign possessions, and all this had to be done with the voluntary system. To provide for all these difficulties we had a system which dated from a time when we had no colonial possessions or Indian Empire to defend; the system of district commands, a system which had been thrust aside by all continental nations. We had rejected it in India, where we had a far better organised and more efficient Army. This system of district commands dated almost from the beginning of our standing Army. So different were the districts in this country that it would be found in their staff officers they varied from nine up to twenty-one, and in battalions in these districts they varied from one to fifteen. In spite of these irregularities they were co-equal in power, each independent of the other, and simply tied to the War Office and subject to the War Office. In England these districts were nine in number, in Scotland one, and in Ireland four. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brodrick) that if he really wished to lay the foundation of a properly-organised Army system in the country, he should change these district commands into Army Corps commands, those in Great Britain to two or three Army Corps districts and those of Ireland into one. When he said a change, he meant much more than any change that had been made on paper up to the present time. He did not mean merely reorganising them on paper, leaving these Army Corps subordinate to the War Office as at the present time; he meant more than that. If the right hon. Gentleman and the Secretary for War thought of waiting until the War Office took the initiative, that would never come until they were in their graves. What the right hon. Gentleman needed to do was, to speak with the authority of the Government to which he belonged, with the force of the public opinion of the of the country behind him, and say that this antiquated system must cease and be replaced by a system in accordance with continental and Indian experience. It must be something real. The Army Corps must not be simply generals who are under the thumb of the War Office, they must be in command of the Army Corps, responsible for everything concerned in the district, ammunition, materiel and arms, and all preparations for defence. Let these be as independent as the Army Corps leaders in Germany, and only by laying the foundation of some such system would the organisation of the military force of the country be effective? What the right hon. Gentleman was doing was simply patchwork. The War Office was an old building, and whilst to an old building they might put a bow window, or an attic, or a new storey, they could not adapt it to new requirements. ["Hear, hear!"] They must start at the very foundation and build upwards. If the right hon. Gentleman would not do this the money he was now asking to be voted for the Army would be wasted, for he would not get any effective return for it. It was a question of organisation, and unless the right hon. Gentleman took that in hand and insisted upon its being real, complete success would not attend his efforts. ["Hear, hear!"] He could warn him that when he came to attack the War Office system he would find there was an enormous *vis inertiæ*. It was a building in which had collected an enormous number of staff officers and staff clerks. They naturally loved power—as did everybody—they had got it in their hands and would keep it if they could. But if the right hon. Gentleman would speak with the strength of the Government and of public opinion behind him, he could say to the War Office that it should be reduced to the limits of any general staff of the foreign armies, and that these staff officers and clerks who were superfluous should go to the Army Corps district. ["Hear, hear!"] He pressed it upon the right hon. Gentleman as a matter of organisation, and he would tell him that, if he genuinely asked for a solution of the difficulties in connection with the British Army in this country, that solution could only come from such a system of decentralisation as he had mapped out to him. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield) observed that the proof of the short service being the better system was that the very regiments they proposed to increase were those which had been successful because of the short service. They were, indeed, the very regiments that were most easily recruited because they had the option of short service. Then came the question of the battalions at home. The Under Secretary said they were supposed to be of a strength of 720 each, or taking the drafts for India 520. He had himself been at Aldershot for something like twenty years, and he had never seen—except in a very rare case—a battalion of 520 men on parade, and he did not think they very often saw 400. As to the question of the Artillery the increase that was proposed would bring the number of horses and men up to what they were about thirty years ago, when there were both more horses and men than now. He thought it was Mr. Stanhope who brought about the reduction, and the Artillery were now about to be put back to the old numbers by the proposed increase. But independently of that, the Army was supposed to be increased, therefore the proportion had fallen enormously. Coming to the Reserves, there was one Reserve which was a perfect myth, namely, the Militia. The Militia Reserve was composed of men who were reserved naturally by being in the Militia. The Militia in the old days was a reserve that filled up their battalions at the battle of Waterloo, and on a hundred other occasions, and formed the Reserve Army of this country. They took 30,000 men out of the Militia, called them Militia Reserves and gave them a pound or thirty shillings a year for the sake of having that name. No members of the Militia would object to see that force used for foreign service when required, and the country would then be enabled to save the £30,000 a year they were now spending on a Militia Reserve, which was practically a stage Army, and which became reserved twice over, first, as the Militia Reserve, and then as the Militia. They had got no artillery for the Militia. They had got Garrison Artillery but there was not a single gun to supply them with. Then there was the Yeomanry, which was very good for scouts and so on, but hardly sufficient to supply the Army with 70,000 men—at least with cavalry—which the Militia was supposed to be able to do. They had thus got a large reserve in the form of Militia without a single gun, and without any real cavalry to support them in the field. He thought this reform was a fictitious one. They increased the infantry, in which they were strongest, but they increased the Artillery to such a small extent as to be utterly inefficient for use as a Reserve, and they did not really improve the existing force of the country against invasion. The only thing they did, was to enable their best force for protection namely, the Guards, to be divided, so that a certain portion of them could be utilised as were the Line regiments, by being sent abroad, but by that means they destroyed the few battalions that were left at home. He complained of the inefficiency of the Army at home. Something was radically wrong with the system of recruiting, and should be altered if we were to have anything more than a paper Army.

*General RUSSELL (Cheltenham) held that the proposals of the Government were unsatisfactory in themselves and insufficient for the needs of the Army. The Under Secretary for War spoke of the recommendations of the Military Board. Military members knew what they were. The Military Board was obliged to take what was given to it. He did not deny that the permanent officials of the War Office were painstaking and industrious, but he contended that they and the Secretary of State should have a freer hand, and not be told by the Treasury: "You cannot have any more money; you must make the best of what you have." The Militia were below the proper strength, and no attempt had been made to enforce the Constitutional law of raising it by ballot. He exceedingly regretted that. The system of deferred pay was most objectionable, and the sooner it was abolished the better. He was surprised that no proposals had been made for extending the manœuvres. The Under Secretary for War had referred to the acquisition of 60 square miles on Salisbury Plain for that purpose. Did he think an Army could manœuvre on a space eight miles by eight miles? Such an area was nothing more than a large drill ground. Our Reserves did not receive sufficient training, and when they were called out to fill up weak battalions, as had been done in the case of Egypt, they had in some instances been found to be extremely insubordinate and difficult to deal with. But why were the Reserves not called out oftener? It was said that if called out they would not get employment. They got retaining pay, and why not call them out at least for a few days every year? ["Hear, hear?"] He had been in the Army 30 years, and he had never known the Militia Reserve to be called out. He believed that any hon. Member who was in the service would bear him out in that statement. He maintained that when the Reserve men had been called out in England they had been found to give a great deal of trouble. [*Cries of* "No!"] As to what had been said with regard to the provisions of guns for the Artillery, he happened to command a brigade of Volunteers, and he should like to know where the guns were that would be a necessary adjunct to the force if they were called upon at short notice to go into action. As far as he could ascertain we had something like 200 guns only nominally assigned for that purpose, which amounted to about half a gun per thousand men. The Government had made no adequate provision of these arms, but they came down to that House with a mere makeshift proposal to carry out the linked battalion system. He would not detain the House longer at that late hour of the night, and he could only apologise for having occupied its time at such length. The matter, however, was one of great importance, and it was this fact that had led him to trespass so long upon the good nature and indulgence of the House. ["Hear, hear!"]

*Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said that the state of our military forces was a subject that fully deserved the attention of that House. For some 18 or 20 years he had held a Commission in Her Majesty's Service—not in the Regulars, but in the Militia—and he had taken a great interest in the question of the recruitment of the force. It appeared to him that it was a mistake to recruit for the Army and for the Militia separately. They ought to recruit for the two branches of the Service together, and after the men had received a certain amount of training they should be allowed to elect whether they would join the Militia or the regular Army. As it was, he believed that some 15,000 or 20,000 men who were recruited for the Militia went into the regular Army every year. That appeared to him to be a very wasteful and unworkable system, which ought to be abolished. Then, in order to stop desertion in the regular Army, a soldier, after a certain probationary period, should be free to return to civil life or to remain with the colours as he thought fit. The Government, in place of adding three battalions to the Guards and sending them to Gibraltar and Malta, where they could not be properly trained, and consequently must deteriorate, should have added four regiments to the Line, which would have been a real and a useful addition to the Army. In his opinion the proposal of the Government to send the Guards abroad would render it very difficult to obtain recruits for that branch of the Army. The hon. Member for Aberdeen had drawn attention to the excessive amount of drinking that went on in the Army—but in India it would be found that some 30 or 40 per cent. of the men were total abstainers. With regard to the Militia Reserve, it was a singular fact that during the Russo-Turkish War, when the men belonging to some regiments were called out, actually more turned up than the number that were called out. That this was the case was brought to his attention by the fact that when the Reserve men in his regiment were paraded for inspection prior to their being drafted into the linked battalions of the line, four more men than the complement were found to be present, and it was only after the roll-call had been taken that the intruders were discovered. In any case, it showed an excellent spirit. With regard to the question of the Militia, it was ridiculous to count 135,000 men as the Militia force. The Militia force was only 105,000 men, the fact being that 30,000 belonged to the Militia Reserve. But in time of emergency there would be, unfortunately, only 75,000, because 30,000 would have to serve in line regiments. The Government had not grasped the nettle and done what he believed the country would have backed them up in, namely, to add four regiments (eight battalions) to our Army. If they had done so, he should have loyally supported them, but as they had not done the right thing, he should vote for the Amendment of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—The House divided:—Ayes, 197; Noes, 63.—(Division List—No. 20—appended.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Arnold, Alfred
Ascroft, Robert
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Gerald William (Leeds)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. Blair (Clackm)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bethell, Captain
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, James A.
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne (Beds.)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Robert
Cranborne, Viscount
Curzon, Viscount (Bucks.)
Dalbiac, Major Philip Hugh
Darling, Charles John
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drucker, A.
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Ellis, Thos. Edw. (Merionethsh.)

Fardell, Thomas George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir R. U. Penrose
Flannery, Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Forwood, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur B.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Godson, Augustus Frederick
Gordon, John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. G'rg's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hamilton, Rt. Hon Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Havelock-Allan, General Sir H.
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Rt. Hn. Lord Arthur (Down)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, Hon. Lionel Raleigh
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hunt, Sir Frederick Seager
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, John H. (Sussex)
Joliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kenny, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, William Edward H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swnsea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. (Essex)
Lockwood, Sir Frank (York)
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, John William
McArthur, William
McCalmont, Maj.-Gen (Anr'mN)
McEwan, William
McKillop, James
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring. Hn. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milbank, Powlett Charles John
Monckton, Edward Philip
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paulton, James Mellor
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Edward
Purvis, Robert
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robson, William Snowdon
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Savory, Sir Joseph
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warkworth, Lord
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir R. E. (Isle of Wight)
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wodehouse, Edmond R. (Bath)
Woodall, William
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

Tellers for the Ayes, Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc-under-Lyme)
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Bartley, George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Brigg, John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Clough, Walter Owen
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Gen. Sir James Bevan
Engledow, Charles John
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Finch-Hatton, Hon. Harold H.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Greville, Captain
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Joicey, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macaleese, Daniel
McDermott, Patrick
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
McKenna, Reginald
McLeod, John
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Morton, Edward John Chalmers
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Parnell, John Howard
Pirie, Captain Duncan Vernon
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, Hon. James (East Kerry)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Wm. Rawson (Halifax)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsf'ld)

Tellers for the Noes, Sir Charles Dilke and Major Rasch.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping), in whose name the following motion stood on the Paper—

> "That the proposal to station three battalions of the Guards in the Mediterranean requires further serious consideration at the hands of her Majesty's Government,"

said it was most distasteful to him to criticise any of the measures brought forward by the Government. He knew he was pledged to support them on every possible occasion, and he thought he had fairly redeemed that pledge. ["Hear, hear!"] But what he had to criticise that evening was not an error of policy he considered it an error of judgment which might easily be altered in the respect of which he was going to speak without any difficulty or loss of dignity to the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] The Government had determined, and he thought rightly, to strengthen the Army, and with that proposition he thought nobody on his side of the House and very few on the other side would find fault, though from the speeches they had heard that night they knew there was a difference of opinion as to the method in which it should be carried out. He wished particularly to speak of the quartering of a portion of the Guards in the Mediterranean. The officers of the Guards, though they did hold very serious objection to the plan, objected not from any selfish motive or because they entertained the slightest objection to serving Her Majesty in any quarter of the globe, but because they believed the plan would be detrimental to the Brigade of Guards and would diminish its efficiency. ["Hear, hear!"] His objections to the plan were that the War Office would not obtain the requisite number of recruits of the necessary physique, and that the scheme would injuriously affect the Household troops by applying to them the linked battalion system which had already failed in the Line. The Brigade of Guards was a privileged body of troops, their privilege being to guard the Queen, and they maintained a high standard in drill and physique. Lord Lansdowne wanted to make use of the Guards to relieve the present strain on the Army. Instead of altering the linked battalion system he was going to use the Guards in a makeshift manner at the risk of impairing their efficiency. The Secretary of State acknowledged that on starting for Gibraltar a battalion would require a large draft of men, and he called that a loan in exchange; but, as a matter of fact, it would be depleting the battalion at home. A battalion at home would have to supply very nearly 200 men, which would reduce its numbers to about 540. He did not find fault with the proposal to increase the Brigade by two battalions, if the recruits could be got, but could they? The Guards, in numbers and efficiency, were now a pattern of excellence to the battalions of the Line; but instead of making the latter equivalent in numbers and, if possible, in excellence to the Guards, the Government were going to level the Guards down to the standard of the Line battalions. How were the Government going to keep up a strong battalion abroad with a yearly waste of about 200 men? The waste would have to be supplied from the battalions at home. The Secretary of State was optimistic in his views. He could not affirm that he would obtain the necessary number of recruits. He only hoped that he would, and confessed that if he found he could not, he would be prepared to modify his proposal. In case of an offensive expedition being necessary from this country, how many men could be put into the field? According to the right hon. Baronet, the Member for the Forest of Dean, not more than 16,000. That was a small enough number of men, but of that small force the Guards would form the very backbone, complete as they were now in numbers. It must be borne in mind that the three years' enlistment system prevailed in the Guards, and consequently twice as many men would have to be drawn off for relieving battalions abroad as would have to be drawn off in the case of Line battalions where the period of service was longer. Then there was the question of training. He presumed that it was in a man's second year of service that he would be sent to Gibraltar, where he could obtain no training in field firing and other necessary duties. After his three years' service he would be passed into the Reserve for nine years, during which he would have no opportunity of practising those duties. At home the Guards got a very fair amount of training at manœuvres or at Pirbright, and they were practised in marching in London. It should be remembered that it was still to be proved whether the men who had been some time in the Reserve would be as efficient on mobilisation as one hoped they would be. There was no doubt that we got a large proportion of our recruits from men who believed that their services in the Brigade of Guards would enable them to get positions on the railways and in the police force. These men also had this advantage—that they were on the spot, and were thus able to obtain these situations with greater ease. He would not allude to the question as to whether it was a breach of faith to ask the Brigade of Guards to serve abroad. Technically speaking, he believed it was not; but it was going perilously near it. It was true that it would cost more to have raised the Line battalions, but the cost of maintaining the battalions of the Brigade of Guards was very nearly £10,000 a year more than the Line battalions. Where were the officers to come from for the new battalions? Were the Government going to bring in officers from other corps and to place them over the heads of officers already serving in the Brigade? The late Secretary for War had stated that of late the standard of height had been higher than it was before. But within three months the height had been reduced from 5ft. 9in. to 5ft. 8½in.; and he remembered the time when the standard had been as low as 5ft. 6in. In times of difficult recruiting they would even have a lower standard than that of these extra battalions. The standard of height, which it was desirable to maintain in the recruits for the Guards, would thus be deteriorated. He feared that the Government had come to a decision on this matter without sufficiently going into the question. Had they consulted an officer commanding a battalion or a regiment on these important points? So far as he could gather not an officer commanding a battalion or regiment had been consulted on the subject, or, if consulted, were in favour of it. On the contrary, they were unanimously against it. He understood that Lord Methuen had been consulted, and that he had reported in favour of the proposal; but if that was so, he could not understand the conduct of Lord Methuen in another place in damning the Measure with very faint praise indeed. If the Government were determined to carry out their policy, he believed it would certainly deteriorate the quality of the men forming the Guards. In time it would certainly weaken, if not ruin, the Brigade. This would not be the first time that the height of men for the Guards had been reduced owing to the want of recruits. In 1878 the Scots Guards wanted 460 men, and the establishment was reduced from 2,000 to 1,500 men; in 1881 they were reduced by two companies, which showed that it was not always easy for the Brigade to procure men of the size and chest measurement necessary for Household troops. He suggested that the authorities should note three points—(1) the battalion abroad should be of the same strength as the battalion at home; (2) their service abroad should not exceed one year or, at the outside, 18 months; and (3) no draft should be sent from the home battalion to the battalion abroad.

LORD ALWYNE COMPTON (Beds, Biggleswade) endorsed the remarks made by his hon. and gallant Friend who had just sat down. The subject was one he had always advocated and preached the gospel of on public platforms on every possible occasion—that was to say, the increase of the Army, and the increased efficiency of the Army. It was a matter of deep regret that on this the first occasion for some years when the Government had been able to bring forward a measure of this kind he could not profess himself in sympathy with them. He did not speak from the sentimental, but from the practical point of view. He was a practical soldier, having been acting adjutant of the Guards for some years, and afterwards adjutant of his own regiment. [*Cheers.*] He cordially agreed with the Under Secretary when he said it was not the system which had failed, but the manner in which it had been carried out. The late Commander-in-Chief, in his evidence before the Wantage Committee, stated that "every battalion at home is inefficent." The Adjutant General at that time said, "At the present moment we have not a single infantry battalion effective at home." And the General Commanding at Aldershot and Lord Wolseley gave evidence to the same effect. The latter added that the "only exception to that state of things was the Guards." Lord Wolseley spoke with perfect truth when he referred to the great difficulties the officers of the Guards had to contend with in order to produce that state of things in their ranks. He thought he was right in saying that when the short-service system was first introduced the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Brigade of Guards were perfectly appalled at the task they had before them. It was only by putting their backs into it that the Guards were brought up to the same state of efficiency in three years' service as they had been under long service. He would brush aside the question of the privileges of the Guards. They had had many in the past, and most of them had departed one by one; and every officer felt that the rest would go some day or other. He would ask leave to brush aside the opinions of the officers, as it was admitted on all hands that their convenience was not part of the question. There might be some gilded youths who could not endure a year at Gibraltar, and there might be men of property whom it would not suit to leave the country. But the Army would not lose if these men left it. But the one difficulty in the past had been that all the officers of the Guards had been volunteering for active service in all parts of the world. He hoped, however, that this question of the Guards going to Gibraltar was not looked upon in any way in the light of a penalty or a punishment. But it could not be forgotton that only two years ago, when one of the battalions of Guards relaxed their discipline somewhat, the authorities, after mature consideration, inflicted this very punishment on officers and men. With regard to Gibraltar as a station, he had served with a Line regiment at Gibraltar for a year. The duties there were particularly hard, and the fatigues were most irksome. The manœuvring ground was so small as to be hardly worthy of the name, and the ranges were not adequate. From the moment that the soldier set foot on Gibraltar his education as a soldier ceased. If three battalions of Guards were sent to Gibraltar it would be for a year or 18 months; and this was the fact which must be faced—that on the outbreak of war the three battalions at Gibraltar would be trained as soldiers up to 18 months and no further, while the three battalions at home would be just training up to 18 months. Supposing the first battalion of Grenadier Guards went out this year; they would draw the best men they could get for the second battalion. In 1898 the second battalion would go out and the first would come home; and the second would then have, not two battalions but only one to draw upon, and from that moment the drafts would always be on one battalion only. The Line regiments had an advantage over the Guards in this respect, because they each had a militia regiment affiliated to them on which they could draw. It was said that these proposals were the outcome of Lord Wantage's Committee; but they were only one of three suggestions made by the Committee. The first suggestion was to take in the Cameron Highlanders and raise five new Line battalions. The next was to treat Malta and Gibraltar as home stations. The third suggestion of the Committee was the one the Government had now brought forward. But the whole crux of the question as to the adoption of that suggestion was, as the Committee had pointed out, the state of the recruiting. It was perfectly true that a few years ago the standard for the Guards had to be raised owing to the number of recruits. But last summer, during the so-called military manœuvres, the Grenadiers were 100 below strength, and a recruiting party had to be sent to London to recruit, especially among the Militia, and it was only by the superhuman efforts of the recruiting party that the battalion was brought up to the required strength. At the present time the Coldstreams and the Scots Greys were also below strength. The fact was that in the years 1894 and 1895 the labour market was in a bad condition, recruits were plentiful, and so the standard had to be raised. But with the advent of a Unionist Government came prosperity, in some trades at least —[*laughter*]—with the result that the number of recruits fell off and the standard had to be lowered. Therefore, considering the actual condition of the Brigade of Guards at the present moment —under strength and with the standard lowered — it was hardly an opportune time to try this new experiment. [" Hear, hear! "] The only real defence of the Government's proposal which he had heard was the defence of economy. It was said that there would be a saving of £200,000 a year. He should like to know how these figures were arrived at.

He doubted whether they would stand the test of investigation. But would anyone seriously propose that for the sake of saving £200,000 a year, they should risk destroying the efficiency of what Lord Wolseley had truly described as the finest body of men in the world?

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmorland, Kendal) thought the experiment which was to be made in respect to the Guards was one the result of which appeared to be extremely doubtful. If battalions which had to find men for their linked battalions abroad would be decimated, it would be interesting to know what, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, was the peculiarity of the Guards which would place them in a different position. Certainly a Brigade of Guards would have two battalions at home to one abroad, and, therefore, the battalions at home would be only decimated or squeezed to half the extent of other battalions. The Guards were the only real short-service battalions we had; they represented, on a small scale, the continental regiments which had real short service and a large reserve. The present peace establishment of a battalion of Guards was 744 men and the war establishment 999. The establishment of a battalion in the Mediterranean was 921 rank and file, and he presumed that under the scheme the right hon. Gentleman would send a battalion of Guards to the Mediterranean of the same strength as line battalions were there now. In that case, battalions of the Guards which were ordered to the Mediterranean would have to find 208 men in place of those left at home. It would also have to find the deficiencies between the present peace establishment—744—and the 920 it would require to have in order to be on the establishment of the Mediterranean, that was 177. In all 385, or roughly speaking 400, would have to be found by the two battalions remaining at home. That would leave each of the two battalions at home 544 strong, of whom a certain proportion would be recruits. The crux of the question came when the first relief was to go out and the first battalion on the Mediterranean service come home. Take the three battalions of the Grenadiers. The first battalion would go out to the Mediterranean and at the end of the year it would come home, and the first relief would have to go out. When the first battalion came home it would have a large number of time-expired men of three years' service. Who would find the 400 men to make the second battalion fit to go to the Mediterranean? Clearly the first battalion which had just come home could not do so. The third battalion would have to find the men. The third battalion would then be left with 344 men, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman, and anyone interested in the Army, whether he would like to see such a battalion of Guards doing duty at home. He greatly feared that under the scheme of the Government the battalions of Guards left at home, after furnishing the reliefs for the battalions abroad, would, in a few years, be reduced to the condition of the Line battalions as described by Lord Wolseley—namely, that of squeezed lemons. He wished to direct attention to another consideration. Hitherto the Guards had been regarded in a certain sense as show battalions, and had been proudly displayed to the foreign visitor as specimens of British infantry. Moreover, the Guards being kept in London got a knowledge of the streets, and were brought frequently into contact with large masses of the people. They were also extremely popular, and in the case of any public disturbance, which unfortunately sometimes occurred, the Guards, composed as they were of steady and trained men, would be much better able to deal prudently with an unruly street mob than a Line battalion made up chiefly of recruits. That was a consideration again not altogether unworthy of the attention of the authorities. ["Hear, hear!"] However, he thought that, in the circumstances, hon. Members would be satisfied if the Government would state that the proposed change would only be in the nature of an experiment, and that, if in the next few years it was found to have any disadvantageous effect on the efficiency and physique of the Guards, that experiment would be given up and the brigade would be allowed to revert to the present system. ["Hear!"]

Debate adjourned.

Supply,—Committee upon Wednesday.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [5th February] further adjourned till Thursday.

MILITARY LANDS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Committee deferred till Wednesday.

SUPPLY [5th FEBRUARY].

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICES, 1896-7.

Egyptian Government (Grant in Aid).

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £798,802, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897, for a Grant in aid of the Expenditure incurred in connection with the Egyptian Expedition to Dongola."

ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY.

Pay, etc., of Indian Troops at Suakim.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £145,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the repayment to the Government of India of the extra expenses incurred in connection with the employment of Indian Troops at Suakim, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1897."

Resolutions agreed to.

TRUSTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [29th January] further adjourned till Wednesday 10th March.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox) moved, That the House do now go into Committee on this Bill.

Objection being taken,

*MR. SPEAKER said that as some Members appeared to object to his leaving the Chair, it was desirable that he should explain why it was not competent for them to do so. Standing Order No. 51 compelled him to leave the Chair, on the Order for the Committee being read, unless there was a Notice of Instruction on the Paper. There were two Notices of Instruction on the Paper, but those being Instructions that were not valid, he might—in accordance with previous and, if he might respectfully say so, correct ruling from the Chair—treat them as nullities and step out of the Chair at once. But the more usual and convenient course was that he should first make a statement as to the reasons why they were not valid Instructions. Therefore, he would say that the Instruction of the hon. Member for Caithness was out of order, in the first place because it was a mandatory injunction to a Committee of the whole House, and, in the second place, because the subject-matter of it might be dealt with by way of Amendment. The Instruction of the hon. and gallant Member for Torquay, was bad, so far as it related to women's votes, because it might be made the subject of an Amendment, and in so far as it related to taking away men's votes it was bad as being outside the scope of the Bill. Both Instructions were bad, and that being so, under the provisions of Standing Order No. 51 he was obliged to leave the Chair forthwith.

House in Committee.

[MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Clause 1,—

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday 23rd June.

FACTORY ACTS (FISHING TRADE) BILL.

Committee deferred till To-morrow.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday 23rd June.

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH) BILL.

Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Constitution of the District Councils of Aldershot and Farnborough, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Powell-Williams; presented accordingly, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Monday, 2nd February, and to be printed.—[Bill 125.]

RAILWAY RETURN TICKETS BILL.

Bill for enacting that all Railway Return Tickets be available for return journeys any time during the year of issue, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macdona, Mr. Rentoul, Mr. Thomas B. Curran, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Goulding, and Mr. Pryce-Jones; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 2nd June, and to be printed.—[Bill 126.]

SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Bill to amend the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Haldane, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Weir, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Hedderwick, and Captain Sinclair; presented, and Read the First time; to be Read a Second time upon Wednesday, 24th March, and to be printed.—[Bill 127.]

Mr. Speaker.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (AID GRANT, ETC.).

On the Motion "That this House do now adjourn,"

MR. LOUGH said that he ventured to ask the Leader of the House another question in reference to the Education Bill. Many Members shared his impression until to-night that the intention was not to take the Second Reading of the Bill this week, but the announcement that it would be proceeded with on Thursday, and further that notice would be given of a Resolution on the subject, caused some uneasiness. He supposed if the Education Bill was to be taken on Thursday the Military Works Bill would not be taken this week?

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he shared the idea that the Education Bill was set down *pro forma* for Thursday but would not be taken until Monday. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY said so far as he was aware the only statement on this subject was that he made in answer to a question from the late Vice President of the Committee of the Council on Education, when he distinctly said the Bill would come on for Second Reading on Thursday, and that he believed was the general wish. ["Hear, hear!" *and* "No, no!"] More than once he had stated that as a preliminary to the Second Reading he would put down a Resolution giving the Bill precedence of the Notices of Motion when set down as first Order of the Day. It was very improbable that the other Bill mentioned would come on this week.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) hoped there was no intention to force the Second Reading on Thursday night.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY: Oh, no.

House Adjourned at Ten Minutes after Twelve o'clock.

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TO

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION).

VOLUME XLV. FOURTH SERIES.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1897.

Explanation of Abbreviations.

Bills Read 1ª, 1°, 2ª, 2°, 3ª, 3°. Read the First, Second, or Third Time.
1R., 2R., 3R. Speech delivered on First, Second, or Third Reading.
Adj. Adjourned.
A. Answer.
c. Commons.
Com. Committee.
com. Committed.
Intro. Introduction.
l. Lords.
Obj. Objections.
Obs. Observations.
Pres. Presented.
Q. Question.
Rep. Reported.
R.P. Report Progress.
Reso. Resolutions.

The Subjects of Debate, as far as possible, are classified under General Headings, e.g. :—

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AGRICULTURE, BOARD OF
ARMY
CIVIL SERVICE
COLONIES
CUSTOMS, EXCISE, AND INLAND REVENUE
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FOREIGN OFFICE
HOME DEPARTMENT
INDIA
IRELAND
LABOUR QUESTIONS
LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD
MERCHANT SHIPPING
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
METROPOLIS
NAVY
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  - *United Kingdom, Qs.* Major Rasch; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 29, 781
- *Hulme Cavalry Barracks, Manchester, Q.* Mr. W. J. Galloway; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1058
- *Increase of Strength of, Qs.* Viscount de Vesci, Lord Monkswell; [*Obs.* Lord Wantage, Lord Methuen]; *As.* Marquess of Lansdowne *Feb* 4, 1243
- *Indian*
  - *Artillery and Engineers, Cadets, Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1040
  - *Troops*
    - *Egyptian Expedition, Qs.* Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton, Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 4, 1301
    - *Scurvy, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 2, 1052
  - *Troopship Warren Hastings, Wreck of, Qs.* Colonel Lockwood, Mr. P. M. Thornton; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 25, 383. *Q.* Mr. Vicary Gibbs; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 1, 905
- *Irish Militia, Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 28, 677
- *Jury Service, Yeomanry Officers, Q.* Mr. J. H. C. Hozier; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 26, 500
- *Lanarkshire Militia, Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 1, 906
- *Lee-Metford Rifles, Bisley Meeting, Q.* Mr. R. Wallace (Perth); *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 26, 495
- *Limerick Military Barracks, Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 22, 280
- *Madras Infantry Regiments, Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Jan* 26, 510
- *Medical Staff, Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 29, 796. *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 1, 925

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Mediterranean Garrison, Brigade of Guards, Qs. Sir J. Fergusson, Sir C. Dilke, Mr. J. McLeod, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 4, 1277
Military Forces (Maintenance) (see that Title)
Military Works Bill, Qs. Mr. C. J. Monk, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 8, 1541
(For Debate see Title of Bill)
Militia
Irish, Q. Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 28, 677
Lanarkshire, Qs. Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 1, 906
Netley Hospital, Assessment, Q. Sir J. S. B. Simeon; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1054
Officers
Uniform of, Q. Major Rasch; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1053
Yeomanry, Jury Service, Q. Mr. J. H. C. Hozier; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 26, 500
Pensions
Fitzpatrick (John), Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 4, 1280
Kelly (John), Qs. Mr. J. Tully, Mr. H. E. Kearley; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 28, 680
Retired Pay, Qs. Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 8, 1554
Rifle Range, Finner, Donegal, Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1063. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 8, 1536
Royal
Barracks, Dublin, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 29, 791
Engineers, Civilian Clerk, Q. Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 29, 791
Troopships
Ballasting, Q. Mr. Vicary Gibbs; *A.* Mr. Macartney *Feb* 1, 904
Indian, Wreck of Warren Hastings, Qs. Colonel Lockwood, Mr. P. M. Thornton; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 25, 383. *Q.* Mr. Vicary Gibbs; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 1, 905
Woolwich Arsenal, Explosion of Cordite, Q. Mr. W. Woodall; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 4, 1313. *Q.* Mr. Egerton; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 8, 1546
Yeomanry Officers, Jury Service, Q. Mr. J. H. C. Hozier; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 26, 500

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£145,000 for Pay, etc., of Indian Troops at Suakim (Supplementary)
In Com., Mr. T. Lough, 1521; Mr. T. R. Buchanan, 1521; Mr. Powell-Williams, 1521; Mr. H. Labouchere, 1522; Mr. J. Dillon, 1523; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1523. Vote Agreed to, 1524 *Feb* 5. Report *Feb* 8, 1637

ARMY ESTIMATES—cont.
£255,300 for Volunteer Corps Capitation Grant (Supplementary)
In Com., Mr. Vesey Knox, (*Amendt.*) 843, 844, 847; [Chairman, 843, 845;] Sir H. Vincent, 844, 845; Mr. T. Lough, 845; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 845; Mr. Brodrick, 846; Mr. J. G. Weir, 847; (*Division*, 848). Vote Agreed to, 848 *Jan* 29. Report *Feb* 1, 1019

Army, Increase in
Viscount de Vesci (*Notice of Question*) *Jan* 28, 661
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ARNOLD-FORSTER, Mr. H. O., *Belfast, W.*
Erasmus Smith Schools, Ireland *Feb* 4, 1302
Military Forces (Maintenance) *Feb* 8, 1615
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1484
Transvaal Raid *Jan* 28, 679

ASCROFT, Mr. R., *Oldham*
Preferential Payments Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment (No. 2) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 300

ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Sir ELLIS, *Sheffield, Ecclesall*
Aliens' Expulsion Act *Feb* 4, 1295
Boer Government, Legislation against Aliens *Jan* 22, 287
British South Africa Committee *Jan* 29, 814
Cape Colony (Sir J. Sivewright) *Jan* 28, 686
Crete *Feb* 4, 1299; *Feb* 8, 1560, 1561
Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 83; *Jan* 26, 579, 584, 586, 590
Reform Prisoners at Pretoria *Feb* 4, 1296
Russia in North East Asia *Feb* 2, 1033
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1461, 1462, 1463, 1479

ASQUITH, Right Hon. H. H., *Fife, E.*
Queen's Speech *Jan* 25, 425, 428
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Assistant County Surveyors (Ireland) Bill
c. Intro., Sir T. Lea; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 302

ATHERLEY-JONES, Mr. LLEWELLYN A., *Durham, N.W.*
Judicature Acts *Jan* 26, 489
Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 3, 1179, 1183, 1184, 1186

ATKINSON, Right Hon. JOHN (Attorney General for Ireland), *Londonderry, N.*
- Agricultural Distress, Westport Union *Jan* 21, 175
- Codification of Laws *Jan* 21, 195
- Consolidation of Irish Acts *Jan* 22, 291
- Cork Winter Assizes *Jan* 25, 402
- Distress
  - West Donegal *Jan* 22, 282
  - Westport Union (Agricultural) *Jan* 21, 175
- Erasmus Smith Schools *Jan* 22, 276
- Evicted Tenants, Ireland *Jan* 21, 179, 180; *Jan* 22, 275
- Government Valuation, Clare *Jan* 22, 277
- Irish
  - Canals *Jan* 22, 290
  - Lights Board *Jan* 22, 290
- Judicial Rents, Ireland *Jan* 21, 180
- Lane-Fox Estate, Leitrim *Feb* 5, 1423
- Loan Fund Board *Jan* 21, 192; *Jan* 22, 269
- Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 20, 121
- Londonderry Corporation Stock *Feb* 4, 1305, 1306; *Feb* 8, 1549
- Port Charges, Dublin *Jan* 22, 280
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 215, 216, 217, 245
- Railway Rates, Ireland *Jan* 21, 190
- School Attendance, Ireland *Jan* 22, 289
- Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act *Jan* 22, 291

Austin, Mr. M., *Limerick, W.*
- Distress, Listowel Union *Feb* 8, 1541

Australasia
- *Australian and Indian Mails, Qs.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 404
- *Cable, Canada and Australasia, Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 28, 663
- *Federal Convention, Australian Colonies, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 22, 271
- *Fiji, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 8, 1556
- *New Hebrides*
  - *Agreements with France, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Jan* 21, 187
  - *Sale of Fire-arms and Spirits, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 8, 1547
- *Norfolk Island, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 21, 187
- *Western Australia, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 2, 1066

Baden-Powell, Sir George S., *Liverpool, Kirkdale*
- Cables
  - Canada and Australasia *Jan* 28, 663
  - West Indian Colonies *Jan* 28, 684
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Bagot, Captain J. F., *Westmorland, Kendal*
- Guards (The) in the Mediterranean *Feb* 8, 1635

Baird, Mr. J. G. A., *Glasgow, Central*
- Illegal Supply of Seamen, Glasgow *Feb* 4, 1283

Balcarres, Lord, *Lancashire, N., Chorley*
- National Portrait Gallery, Police Protection *Jan* 29, 782

BALFOUR, Right Hon. ARTHUR J. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Manchester, E.*
- Agricultural Rating Bill *Jan* 21, 176
- Army Estimates *Feb* 4, 1314
- British South Africa Committee *Jan* 26, 515
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  - General *Jan* 19, 41; *Jan* 20, 122; *Jan* 26, 599, 600; *Jan* 28, 780; *Jan* 29, 800; *Feb* 8, 1564
  - Government Bills *Jan* 19, 41
  - Reports of Money Committees (*Motion*) *Jan* 29, 848
  - Supply
    - Irish Estimates *Feb* 4, 1311
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    - Order of Last Session *Jan* 21, 200
  - Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1068, 1069, 1072, 1075
  - Wednesday Sittings *Jan* 22, 293
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- Catholic University, Ireland *Feb* 1, 925
- Current Rate of Wages, Woolwich District *Jan* 25, 408
- Education
  - Bill (Poor School Board Districts) *Jan* 22, 291, 292
  - Grant, Scotland *Feb* 2, 1067
- Egyptian Expedition *Feb* 2, 1067
- Episcopal Elections *Feb* 4, 1313
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Jan* 21, 199, 200; *Jan* 22, 293; *Jan* 26, 514; *Jan* 29, 799; *Feb* 2, 1067
- Hours of Polling, Metropolis *Feb* 4, 1312
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- Indian Famine and Plague *Jan* 21, 178
- International Monetary Conference *Jan* 25, 409
- Licensing Laws Commission *Jan* 25, 409
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- Necessitous Board Schools, Scotland *Feb* 5, 1435
- Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 729
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  - Reign
    - Gifts of Real Property *Feb* 5, 1435
    - Treason-felony Prisoners *Jan* 28, 691; *Feb* 5, 1435
  - Speech *Jan* 19, 71, 76, 77, 78, 80; *Jan* 20, 161; *Jan* 22, 319, 320, 330, 362, 370; *Jan* 25, 454, 457; *Jan* 26, 593
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  - Bounty Fund: George Brooks *Feb* 8, 1562, 1563
  - Patriotic Fund *Feb* 2, 1066
  - Residence in Ireland *Feb* 4, 1311
- Secret Service Fund *Jan* 22, 292
- Shipping Maritime Property (Compensation for Injury) *Feb* 1, 926
- Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1455, 1516

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- Turkish Loan *Jan* 29, 799
- University Education of Roman Catholics *Jan* 28, 690
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Jan* 22, 376; *Feb* 1, 926, 937, 938, 947, 948, 949, 956, 967, 1002, 1027, 1028: *Feb* 2, 1099, 1100, 1101, 1106, 1150, 1152, 1153, 1161, 1171; *Feb* 4, 1313, 1324, 1337, 1347, 1378, 1380, 1394, 1415; *Feb* 8, 1640

BALFOUR, RIGHT HON. GERALD W. (Chief Secretary for Ireland), *Leeds, Central*
- Agricultural
  - Expenditure, Ireland *Jan* 29, 798
  - Prices, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1035, 1036
- Agricultural Land Rating (Ireland) Bill *Jan* 28, 687
- Amalgamation of Poor Law Unions, Ireland *Feb* 5, 1426
- Belfast
  - Board of Guardians *Jan* 25, 391
  - Musgrave Street Police Barracks *Feb* 4, 1307
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  - Agriculture, Ireland *Feb* 5, 1418
  - Guardians
    - Belfast *Jan* 25, 391
    - Newry *Jan* 28, 670; *Jan* 29, 788
- Bog Slide, Kerry *Jan* 28, 669
- Castlepollard Petty Sessions *Feb* 5, 1424
- Cattle, Transit of, by Sea *Jan* 26, 509
- Charge of Larceny, Cork *Feb* 5, 1427
- Civil Service Retirement *Jan* 25, 386
- Congested Districts Board, Ireland *Jan* 25, 388
- Connemara
  - Distress *Jan* 25, 385
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- Cork
  - Charge of Larceny *Feb* 5, 1427
  - Illegal Trawling *Feb* 8, 1559
  - Queen's College *Feb* 4, 1306
  - Railways (Mid) *Jan* 28, 683
- Deportation of Paupers to Ireland *Feb* 2, 1052
- Distress
  - Belmullet Union *Jan* 25, 404; *Jan* 28, 681
  - Connemara *Jan* 25, 385
  - Donegal (West) *Jan* 26, 504
  - Listowel Union *Feb* 8, 1541
  - Westport Union *Feb* 4, 1284
- Divisional Police Commissioners (Ireland) *Feb* 4, 1281
- Dog Licences *Feb* 1, 909
- Donegal
  - Distress (West) *Jan* 26, 504
  - Petty Sessions *Feb* 4, 1285
  - Railway Extensions *Feb* 4, 1309
- Drawing, Irish Schools *Jan* 25, 382
- Dublin
  - Grangegorman Prison *Jan* 25, 383
  - Land Commission Office *Feb* 4, 1291
  - Police Reserve Force *Feb* 2, 1041
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- Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act (1885) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 875
- Erasmus Smith Schools *Jan* 28, 674; *Feb* 4, 1302
- Evicted Tenants, Ireland *Feb* 8, 1538
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  - Connemara *Feb* 2, 1037
  - Leitrim County *Feb* 5, 1419
- Fair Rent
  - Agreements, Ireland *Feb* 5, 1425
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  - Resident Magistracy *Feb* 4, 1307
- Irish-speaking Witnesses *Jan* 25, 403
- Kerry
  - Bog Slide *Jan* 28, 669
  - Warden Estate *Feb* 1, 916
- Labourers
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  - Allotments, Ireland *Feb* 8, 1554, 1555
  - Cottages, Ireland *Jan* 25, 381
- Land
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    - Office, Dublin *Feb* 4, 1291
  - Purchase, Longford *Jan* 25, 390
  - Sub-Commissioners, Ireland *Jan* 25, 399
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  - Land Commission *Jan* 28, 673
  - Road Contracts *Feb* 5, 1422
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- Longford
  - Fee Farm Tenants *Jan* 25, 391
  - Labourers Acts *Feb* 5, 1427
  - Land Purchase *Jan* 25, 390
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  - Resident *Feb* 4, 1307
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- Monaghan
  - Fair Rent Applications *Jan* 25, 384, 385
  - Newbliss Court-house *Feb* 4, 1298
  - Sanitary Accommodation, Clones *Feb* 5, 1425
  - Tenants' Holdings *Feb* 2, 1052
- Mountjoy Prison, Health of Prisoner *Feb* 1, 909
- Mullingar Union, Medicine Contract *Jan* 26, 503
- Municipal Franchise, Ireland *Jan* 26, 499
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  - Board of Education *Jan* 25, 392
  - Schools, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1050, 1051; *Feb* 4, 1300
- Newbliss Court-house, Monaghan *Feb* 4, 1298
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- Petty Sessions
  - Castlepollard *Feb* 5, 1424
  - Donegal *Feb* 4, 1285
- Police Reserve Force, Dublin *Feb* 2, 1041
- Pollen Fishery, Lough Neagh *Feb* 1, 912, 913
- Poor Relief, Ireland *Jan* 28, 685
- Prisons, Ireland
  - Grangegorman, Dublin *Jan* 25, 383
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- Purchase of Holdings, Ireland *Feb* 1, 906
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  - College, Cork *Feb* 4, 1306
  - Speech *Jan* 26, 571
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  - Extension
    - Donegal *Feb* 4, 1309
    - Ireland *Feb* 5, 1430
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  - Mid-Cork *Jan* 28, 683
  - Rates, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1045
- Road Contracts, Leitrim *Feb* 5, 1422
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- Sanitary Accommodation, Clones, Monaghan *Feb* 5, 1425
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    - Workmistresses *Feb* 8, 1556
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  - Teachers' Pensions, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1050
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- Stipendiary Magistrates, Ireland *Jan* 28, 675
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- Town Tenants, Ireland *Jan* 26, 510
- Transit of Cattle by Sea *Jan* 26, 509
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- Warden Estate, Kerry *Feb* 1, 916
- Waterford Bacon Trade Dispute *Jan* 26, 505
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BANBURY, Mr. FREDERICK G., *Camberwell, Peckham*
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 26, 579

BARTLEY, Mr. G. C. T., *Islington, N.*
- Business of the House: Supply *Jan* 29, 834
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- Married Persons Small Industrial Incomes (Tax Relief) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 1, 1027
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- Old Age Provident Pensions Bill, Intro. *Jan* 26, 516
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- Matabeleland *Jan* 21, 189, 190
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- Army Estimates: £145,000 for Pay of Indian Troops at Suakim (Supplementary) *Feb* 5, 1523
- Codification of Laws *Jan* 21, 194
- Collection of Licences *Feb* 4, 1286
- Elections, Interference of Peers in *Jan* 19, 38
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- Income Tax on Unpaid Dividends *Feb* 8, 1550, 1551
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  - Teachers' Pensions (Ireland) *Jan* 22, 278
- Settled Property, Estate Duty *Feb* 8, 1548
- Solicitors' Licence Duty, Ireland *Jan* 26, 495
- Special Commissioner of Assize (Personal Explanation) *Jan* 21, 200
- Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1439, 1445, 1447, 1452, 1466, 1467, 1468, 1478, 1479, 1482, 1505, 1506, 1512, 1518
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BEGG, Mr. F. FAITHFULL, *Glasgow, St. Rollox*
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DENNY, Colonel J. M., *Kilmarnock Burghs*
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- Indian Troops, Scurvy *Feb* 2, 1052
- Mediterranean Garrison, Brigade of Guards *Feb* 4, 1278
- Mercantile Marine Classification *Feb* 1, 919
- Military Forces (Maintenance) *Feb* 8, 1565, 1569, 1586, 1587, 1589
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Dillon, Mr. John, *Mayo, E.*
- Army Estimates: £145,000 for Pay of Indian Troops at Suakim (Supplementary) *Feb* 5, 1523
- Crete *Feb* 8, 1561
- Evicted Tenants, Ireland *Jan* 21, 180; *Feb* 8, 1538
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- Irish Mail Service *Jan* 25, 393
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- Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government, *Feb* 5, 1502, 1505, 1506
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- Warden Estate, Kerry *Feb* 1, 915, 916

Disraeli, Mr. Coningsby R., *Cheshire, Altrincham*
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 26, (*Amendt.*) 577, 588, 589

Dixon-Hartland, Sir Frederick D., Bart., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
- London Water Companies Amalgamation Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 302

Dixon, Mr. G., *Birmingham, Edgbaston*
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Donelan, Captain A. J. C., *Cork, E.*
- Army Foreign Meat Supply *Jan* 21, 182; *Jan* 25, 406, 407
- Daunt's Rock Lightship *Jan* 21, 181, 182; *Jan* 25, 406; *Jan* 28, 672
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  - Cork *Feb* 8, 1559
  - Irish Coast *Feb* 1, 913, 914
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- National Gallery and British Museum (Sundays) *Feb* 4, 1293
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Doogan, Mr. P. C., *Tyrone, E.*
- County Government (Ireland) Bill, Intro., *Jan* 22, 299
- Pollen Fishery, Lough Neagh *Feb* 1, 912
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 237; *Jan* 26, 576

Douglas-Pennant, Hon. Edward S., *Northants, S.*
- Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 700, 704, 705, 707, 745, 746

Douglas, Right Hon. A. Akers- (see Akers-Douglas)

Drage, Mr. Geoffrey, *Derby*
- Poor Law Schools *Feb* 1, 902
- Queen's Speeech *Jan* 21, 203
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 4, 1365, 1366

Duncombe, Hon. H. V., *Cumberland, Egremont*
- Shop Assistants (Half Holiday) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 2, 1083
- Unlawful Possession Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 879

Dunn, Sir William, Bart., *Paisley*
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Jan* 26, 513

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. Hart, Bart., *Kent, Dartford*
- Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 638
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1089; *Feb* 4, 1319

Education Acts Amendment Bill
- *c.* Intro., Mr. Sydney Gedge; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 301

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- *c.* Intro., Mr. T. M. Healy; Read 1° *Jan* 26, 516
- 2R. Mr. T. M. Healy, 875; Mr. G. Balfour, 875; Mr. W. Johnston, 876 *Jan* 29
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Lord President—Duke of Devonshire
Vice President—Sir John E. Gorst

- *Catholic University, Ireland, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 1, 925
- *Drawing, Irish Schools. Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 382
- *Education Bill (Poor School Board Districts), Qs.* Sir C. Dilke, Sir W. Harcourt; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 22, 291

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Erasmus Smith Schools, Ireland, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 276. *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673. *Qs.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1302
Heywood, Public Schools at, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Jan* 25, 387
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National Schools, Ireland, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1050; *Feb* 4, 1300
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Scotland, *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1435
Unpaid Grants, *Q.* Mr. F. A. Channing; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 2, 1063
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St. Andrew's School, Willesden, *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall, Mr. A. J. Mundella; *As.* Sir. J. Gorst *Feb* 2, 1043
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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—cont.
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St. Jude's, Bethnal Green, *Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Jan* 25, 385
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EDWARDS, General Sir J. BEVAN, *Hythe*
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EGERTON, Hon ALAN DE TATTON, *Cheshire, Knutsford*
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ELLIS, Mr. J. E., *Notts, Rushcliffe*
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ENGLEDOW, Mr. C. J., *Kildare, N.*
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FARDELL, Mr. T. G., *Paddington, S.*
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FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
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FERGUSON, Mr. R. C. M., *Leith Burghs*
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FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir JAMES, Bart., *Manchester, N.E.*
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Field, Mr. W., *Dublin, St. Patrick*
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FINLAY, Sir R. B. (Solicitor General), *Inverness Burghs*
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Flannery, Mr. J. Fortescue, *Yorkshire, W.R., Shipley*
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Flynn, Mr. J. C., *Cork, N.*
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Zanzibar, Slavery in, Q. Sir J. H. Kennaway; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Jan* 21, 195. *Q.* Mr. J. A. Pease; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 4, 1297

FORWOOD, Right Hon. Sir A. B., Bart., *Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk*
Elementary Education (Permissive Rates Aid) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 300
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FOSTER, Mr. H. S., *Suffolk, Lowestoft*
Episcopal Elections *Feb* 4, 1312
Southwold, Damage by Gales *Feb* 4, 1303
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FOSTER, Sir B. WALTER, *Derbyshire, Ilkeston*
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FOWLER, Right Hon. Sir H. H., *Wolverhampton, E.*
Queen's Speech *Jan* 26, 541
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1098, 1099, 1100, 1101, 1102, 1106

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill
c. Intro., Sir C. Dilke; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 304

GALLOWAY, Mr. W. J., *Manchester, S.W.*
Hulme Cavalry Barracks *Feb* 2, 1058
Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 645

GEDGE, Mr. SYDNEY, *Walsall*
Education Acts Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 301
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GEORGE, Mr. D. LLOYD- (see LLOYD-GEORGE)

GIBBS, Hon. ALBAN G. H., *London, City*
Archdeaconry of London (Additional Endowments) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 296

GIBBS, Hon. VICARY, *Herts, St. Albans*
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Wreck, Indian Troopship *Warren Hastings Feb* 1, 905

GILES, Mr. C. T., *Cambridge, Wisbech*
Post Office, Four-mile Radius *Feb* 2, 1033

GILHOOLY, Mr. JAMES, *Cork County, W.*
Collision at Sea, *H.M. Gunboat Landrail* and *s.s. Siren Jan* 28, 677
Illegal Trawling, Irish Coast *Feb* 1, 913

GODDARD, Mr. D. F., *Ipswich*
Labour Bureaux Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 299
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GODSON, Mr. A. F., *Kidderminster*
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 605

Gold and Silver Plate Licences Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. C. Richards; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 302

GORST, RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN E. (Vice President of the Council on Education), *Cambridge University*
Berriew School Bill, Intro. *Feb* 1, 926
Elementary Schools
Building Grants *Feb* 5, 1432
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Accommodation, Castleton *Feb* 4, 1309
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GOSCHEN, Right Hon. GEORGE J. (First Lord of the Admiralty), *St. George's, Hanover Square*
- Admiralty Charts *Jan* 26, 492
- Boat Accidents, Royal Navy *Jan* 28, 665
- Collision at Sea, *H.M. Gunboat Landrail* and *s.s. Siren Jan* 28, 677
- Military Forces (Maintenance) *Feb* 8, 1597
- Missing Steamer, *State of Georgia Jan* 28, 689
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  - College, Dartmouth *Jan* 26, 497
  - Examining Boards *Jan* 26, 501
  - Royal Reserve *Jan* 26, 509
- Rams of Warships *Jan* 26, 491

Gourley, Colonel Sir E. T., *Sunderland*
- Boiler Inspection and Registration Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 295
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Gray, Mr. Ernest, *West Ham, N.*
- Science and Art Classes *Feb* 2, 1041, 1042
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 1014, 1019; *Feb* 2, 1084

Green, Mr. Walford D., *Wednesbury*
- Rating (Places of Worship and Schools) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 298

Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. A. S. T., *Kent, Tunbridge*
- Law of Libel Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 299
- Light Locomotives Act (Traction Engines) *Jan* 28, 668
- Telephone Service, Tunbridge Wells *Feb* 2, 1038, 1039

Griffith, Mr. Ellis J., *Anglesey*
- Elementary Schools, Rating *Feb* 8, 1550
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Grocers' Certificates (Scotland) Abolition Bill
- *c.* Intro., Sir J. Leng; Read 1° *Jan* 26, 515

Guards (The) in the Mediterranean
- On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now Leave the Chair: Colonel Lockwood, (*Amendt.*) 1629; Lord A. Compton, 1632; Captain Bagot, 1635; (*Adj.*) *Feb* 8

Gull, Sir W. Cameron, Bart., *Devon, Barnstaple*
- Water Supply, Rural Districts *Feb* 4, 1274

Haldane, Mr. R. B., *Haddington*
- Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 5, 1526
- Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 8, 1639
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 4, 1338, 1343

HALSBURY, Lord (Lord Chancellor)
- Queen's Speech, Delivered *Jan* 19, 2

HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord GEORGE F. (Secretary of State for India), *Middlesex, Ealing*
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  - Exchange Compensation *Jan* 26, 506
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    - Sale of Silver *Jan* 26, 508
  - Mortality, Central Provinces *Feb* 8, 1555
  - Troops
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- Madras Infantry Regiments *Jan* 26, 511
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 97; *Jan* 26, 532, 534

Hammond, Mr. John, *Carlow*
- Enniskillen Fusiliers Enlistment *Feb* 5, 1427
- Tenants' Application for Reinstatement, Carlow *Jan* 28, 675

HANBURY, Right Hon. R. W. (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), *Preston*
- Adjournment *Feb* 5, 1528
- Askeaton and Kilmallock Abbeys *Jan* 22, 270
- Australian and Indian Mails *Jan* 25, 404, 405
- Book Post Charges *Jan* 29, 784
- British Museum Staff *Feb* 2, 1046
- Calais Harbour *Feb* 2, 1037
- Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway *Feb* 4, 1275
- Contracts with Foreigners *Feb* 4, 1270
- Crofter Commission, Scotland *Feb* 4, 1305
- Customs Outdoor Officers, Ireland *Feb* 4, 1295
- Edinburgh University Library Buildings *Jan* 29, 796
- Education Fee Grant, Ireland *Jan* 22, 283
- Floods, Longford *Feb* 2, 1046
- Inland Money Orders *Feb* 5, 1429
- Kilcrea Abbey, Cork *Jan* 28, 682
- Loans to Tenants, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1044
- Mail Service
  - Australian and Indian *Jan* 25, 404, 405
  - Bag Seals *Feb* 4, 1273
  - Contract Subsidies *Feb* 1, 919
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  - Stornoway *Feb* 4, 1276
- National
  - Gallery and British Museum, Sundays *Feb* 4, 1293
  - Portrait Gallery, Police Protection *Jan* 29, 782
- Netley Hospital Assessment *Feb* 2, 1054
- Parcels Post
  - Charges *Jan* 29, 783
  - Switzerland *Jan* 28, 666
- Postal
  - Arrangements
    - Bournae, Tipperary *Jan* 26, 497
    - Cavan (West) *Feb* 1, 902
    - Leitrim (South) *Jan* 26, 502
  - Facilities
    - Longford *Feb* 5, 1419
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  - Limerick *Jan* 21, 178
  - Savings Bank
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  - Trosses, Donegal *Jan* 25, 401
- Post Office Amendment Act (1895) *Feb* 2, 1048
- Protection of Ancient Monuments, Ireland *Jan* 29, 798
- Public Works, Ireland *Jan* 28, 682
- Rating of Government Property, London *Feb* 4, 1308
- River Suck Drainage *Jan* 25, 399; *Jan* 26, 499
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- Sample Post, Butterflies *Feb* 1, 918
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  - Post Office *Feb* 1, 906
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  - Service, Ireland *Jan* 22, 283
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  - Trunk Line, Cork and Dublin *Jan* 28, 683
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HARCOURT, Right Hon. Sir WILLIAM VERNON, *Monmouthshire, W.*
- British South Africa Committee *Jan* 26, 515; *Jan* 29, 808, 826
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- Education Bill (Poor School Board Districts) *Jan* 22, 291
- Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Jan* 21, 199
- Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 617, 618
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- Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 3, 1225
- Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 723, 750
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- Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 651
- Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1465, 1466, 1467, 1468, 1473, 1476, 1505, 1518
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 1028; *Feb* 2, 1112, 1154, 1155; *Feb* 4, 1337, 1382, 1385, 1391, 1392, 1394, 1399, 1402, 1403, 1404, 1408

HARDY, Mr. LAURENCE, *Kent, Ashford*
- Taxation on Clerical Incomes *Feb* 2, 1033

HARRINGTON, Mr. TIMOTHY, *Dublin City, Harbour*
- Daunt's Rock Lightship *Jan* 22, 274
- Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 301
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 20, 148; *Jan* 21, 268; *Jan* 22, 305, 308, 309, 320

HARRISON Mr. CHARLES, *Plymouth*
- Land Values (Towns) Assessment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 298

HART DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W., Bart. (see DYKE)

HAVELOCK-ALLAN, General Sir H. M., Bart., *Durham, S.E.*
- Military Forces (Maintenance) *Feb* 8, 1591

HEALY, Mr. MAURICE, *Cork City*
- Codification of Laws *Jan* 21, 194, 195
- Consolidation of Irish Acts *Jan* 22, 291
- Daunt's Rock Lightship *Jan* 22, 273, 274; *Jan* 25, 405
- Evicted Tenants, Ireland *Jan* 22, 274
- Flogging Prisoners *Jan* 22, 281
- Irish Mail Service *Jan* 25, 393; *Jan* 28, 683
- Probate Duty Grant, Ireland *Jan* 21, 194
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 25, 436
- Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act *Jan* 22, 291
- Trunk Telephone Line, Cork and Dublin *Jan* 28, 683

HEALY, Mr. TIMOTHY M., *Louth, N.*
- Agricultural Land Rating (Ireland) Bill *Jan* 21, 175, 176; *Jan* 28, 687
- British South Africa Committee *Jan* 20, 172; *Jan* 26, 515; *Jan* 29, 824
- Business of the House
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  - Supply *Jan* 29, 838
  - Wednesday Sittings *Jan* 22, 293
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- Drawing, Irish Schools *Jan* 25, 382
- Educational Endowment (Ireland) Act (1885) Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 26, 516; 2R. *Jan* 29, 875
- Erasmus Smith Schools *Jan* 22, 276; *Jan* 28, 673
- Industries (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 29, 884
- Irish Mail Service *Jan* 25, 394
- Land Law (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 293
- Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill *Jan* 21, 268; *Jan* 29, 874
- Loan Fund (Ireland) Acts *Jan* 22, 270
- Municipal Franchise, Ireland *Jan* 26, 499
- Port Charges, Dublin *Jan* 22, 279
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 77; *Jan* 20, 134, 135, 147; *Jan* 21, 225, 227; *Jan* 22, 331, 333, 334, 366; *Jan* 25, 430; *Jan* 26, 553
- Street Preaching in Sligo *Jan* 26, 499
- Unlawful Possession Bill, 2R. *Jan* 26, 598

HEATON, Mr. J. HENNIKER, *Canterbury*
- Australian and Indian Mails *Jan* 25, 404, 405
- Book Post Charges *Jan* 29, 783
- Mail Contract Subsidies *Feb* 1, 919
- Parcel Post Charges *Jan* 29, 783
- Post Office Savings Bank Deposits *Feb* 4, 1271, 1272

HEDDERWICK, Mr. T. C. H., *Wick Burghs*
- Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 298
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 22, 348
- Voluntary Schools Grant (Scotch Equivalent) *Feb* 4, 1312

HEMPHILL, Right Hon. Serjeant C. H., *Tyrone, N.*
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 222; *Jan* 26, 573

HICKMAN, Sir A., *Wolverhampton, W.*
- Working Men's Dwellings (No. 2) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 4, 1416

HICKS BEACH, Sir M. E., Bt. (see BEACH)

HOBHOUSE, Mr. H., *Somerset, E.*
- Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 27, 659
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 1010

HOGAN, Mr. J. F., *Tipperary, Mid*
- Australian Colonies, Federal Convention *Jan* 22, 271
- British Museum Staff *Feb* 2, 1046
- *Costa Rica Packet* Case *Jan* 26, 498
- Emigrants' Information Office *Jan* 26, 503
- Fiji *Feb* 8, 1556
- New Hebrides
  - Agreement with France *Jan* 21, 187
  - Sale of Fire-arms and Spirits in *Feb* 8, 1547
- Norfolk Island *Jan* 21, 187
- Postal Arrangements, Bournae, Tipperary *Jan* 26, 497
- Post Office Accommodation, Thurles, Tipperary *Jan* 22, 272
- Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Visit of Colonial Premiers *Feb* 1, 924
- Unification of Time at Sea *Jan* 21, 191
- Western Australia *Feb* 2, 1066

HOLLAND, Hon. L. R., *Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley*
- Vaccination Officers' Fees *Feb* 1, 923

HOME DEPARTMENT

Secretary of State—Sir M. W. RIDLEY
Under Secretary of State—Mr. JESSE COLLINGS

- *Armenian Refugee Killed in London*, *Qs.* Sir W. Lawson, Mr. J. O'Kelly; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 667
- *Belfast Textile Trades, Fines*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 2, 1034
- *Burial Fees, Ulverston*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 21, 173

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HOME DEPARTMENT—cont.
- *Cab Licences, Metropolis*, *Q.* Mr. T. G. Fardell; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 1, 908
- *Committals to Assizes*, *Qs.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 395
- *Dangerous Trades*, *Q.* Mr. R. McKenna; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 386
- *Escaped Convicts*, *Qs.* Mr. M. Davitt, Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. A. Pease; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 21, 188
- *Experiments on Living Animals*, *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1287. *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 5, 1431
- *Factories and Workshops Act (Particulars Section)*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 5, 1422
- *Factory Acts*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 21, 184
- *Flogging Prisoners*, *Qs.* Mr. J. A. Pease, Mr. M. Healy, Mr. J. Morley, Sir W. Lawson, Sir J. F. Leese, Mr. H. E. Kearley; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 22, 280
- *Foundry Workers*, *Q.* Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 26, 494
- *Housebreaking, Liverpool Assizes*, *Q.* Mr. H. Seton-Karr; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 664
- *Imposition of Fines on Workmen*, *Qs.* Mr. G. W. Wolff, Mr. J. Samuel; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 409
- *Inebriates*, *Q.* Mr. Lees Knowles; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1287
- *Injuries to Workmen, Foreign Shipowners*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Flannery; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 685
- *Insanity*, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1282
- *Manslaughter at Manchester*, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 2, 1039
- *Midwives' Registration*, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1270
- *Mill Accident, Batley*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 29, 794
- *Oil Lamp Accidents*, *Q.* Captain Donelan; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 29, 793
- *Payment of Common Jurors*, *Q.* Mr. Lloyd-Morgan; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 1, 914
- *Prisoners' Property Fund*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1309
- *Prisons*
  - *Northampton, Advertisements*, *Q.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 8, 1543
  - *Officers' Instruction*, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 671
  - *Visiting Committees*, *Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 670
- *Privilege Cab System*, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 396
- *Shuttle Guards*, *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 22, 284. *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 379. *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 688

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HOME DEPARTMENT—cont.
Treason-felony Prisoners
Duff, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 667
Fetherstone and Flanagan, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 26, 509
Wool Sorting, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 664

HOPKINSON, Mr. A., *Wilts, Cricklade*
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 1007

HOWELL, Mr. W. T., *Denbigh Boroughs*
Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 656, 658

HOWORTH, Sir H. H., *Salford, S.*
British South Africa Committee *Jan* 29, 820
Queen's Speech *Jan* 22, (*Amendt.*) 359, 362, 366, 368; *Jan* 25, 429

HOZIER, Mr. J. H. C., *Lanarkshire, S.*
Jury Service, Yeomanry Officers *Jan* 26, 500

HUMPHREYS-OWEN, Mr. ARTHUR C., *Montgomery*
Elementary Education (Arrears of Grants) *Jan* 26, 489
Howell's Charity *Jan* 26, 493; *Feb* 4, 1304, 1305
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1121

HUTTON, Mr. A. E., *York., W. R., Morley*
Elementary Schools (Building Grants) *Feb* 5, 1432
St. Jude's School, Bethnal Green *Jan* 25, 385
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Accommodation, Castleton *Feb* 4, 1308
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Imperial Defence Act 1888 (Ports and Coaling Stations)
Account Pres. (*c.*) *Feb* 1, 900

INDIA

Secretary of State—Lord G. HAMILTON
Under Secretary of State—Earl of ONSLOW

Chitral Campaign Medal, *Q.* Mr. A. M. Brookfield; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 2, 1057
Egyptian Expedition, Indian Troops, *Qs.* Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton, Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 4, 1301
Exchange Compensation, *Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Jan* 26, 506.
Health of Troops in India, *Qs.* Colonel Lockwood, Mr. C. J. Darling, Major Rasch; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Jan* 25, 397
Indian
Artillery and Engineers, Cadets, *Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1040
Famine
Mortality, *Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 5, 1431

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Indian—cont.
Famine—cont.
Plague, and, *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough, Dr. G. B. Clark, Mr. G. Lambert, Mr. J. Caldwell, Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton, Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 21, 176. *Qs.* Sir A. R. Scoble, Mr. J. M. Maclean; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton *Jan* 22, 284
Relief Measures, *Qs.* Lord Kinnaird; [*Obs.* Earl of Northbrook, Lord Wenlock, Earl of Kimberley;] *As.* Earl of Onslow *Feb* 1, 885. *Q.* Lord Kinnaird; *A.* Earl of Onslow *Feb* 8, 1529
Sale of Silver, *Q.* Mr. J. M. Maclean; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Jan* 26, 507
Mails, Australian and, *Qs.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 404
Troops
Egyptian Expedition, *Qs.* Mr. T. R. Buchanan; *As.* Lord G. Hamilton, Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 4, 1301
Scurvy, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 2, 1052
Madras Infantry Regiments, *Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Jan* 26, 510
Mortality, Central Indian Provinces, *Q.* Mr. M. Davitt; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton *Feb* 8, 1555

India (Superannuation Allowance)
Address for Copy Correspondence regarding Superannuation Allowance of Major-General Sir Owen Tudor Burne (*l.*) *Jan* 19, 36
Return Pres. (*c.*) *Jan* 19, 120

Industrial and Provident and Incorporated Building Societies (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. F. A. Channing; Read 1° *Jan* 27, 660

Industries (Ireland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. T. M. Healy; Read 1° *Jan* 29, 884

Injuries to Workmen (Employers' Liability) Bill
c. Intro., Sir A. Forwood; Read 1° *Feb* 2, 1083

Insanity (see LUNACY)

Intoxicants (Sale of): Houses of Parliament (see PARLIAMENT: COMMONS, subheading *Miscellaneous*)

IRELAND

Lord Lieutenant—Earl CADOGAN
Chief Secretary—Mr. G. W. BALFOUR
Lord Chancellor—Lord ASHBOURNE
Attorney General—Mr. J. ATKINSON
Solicitor General—Mr. W. KENNY

Agricultural
Distress (Westport Union), *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. M. Davitt, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 174
Expenditure, *Q.* Mr. Engledow; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 798
Prices, *Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1035

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IRELAND—cont.
  Agricultural Land Rating (Ireland) Bill, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 687
  Agricultural Rating Bill, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 21, 175
  Amalgamation of Poor Law Unions, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
  Army
    Contracts, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 29, 788
    Foreign Meat Supply, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 21, 182. *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 25, 406
  Askeaton and Kilmallock Abbeys, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 270
  Bacon Trade Dispute, *Waterford*, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 504
  Belfast
    Board of Guardians, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 391
    Lough, *Training Ship*, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *Jan* 29, 789
    Musgrave Street Police Barracks, *Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1307
    Textile Trades, *Fines*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 2, 1034
  Belmullet Union, *Distress in*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 403
  Board of
    Agriculture, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1418
    Guardians, *Newry*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 669. *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 787
  Bog Slide, *Kerry*, *Q.* Mr. James Roche; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 668
  Canals, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 289
  Carlow County, *Tenant's Application for Reinstatement*, *Q.* Mr. J. Hammond; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 675
  Castlepollard Petty Sessions, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1423
  Catholic University, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 1, 925
  Cattle, *Transit of*, *by Sea*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 509
  Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1275
  Cavan (West), *Postal Arrangements*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 1, 901
  Charge of Larceny, *Cork*, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1427
  Civil Service Retirement, *District Lunatic Asylums*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 386
  Clare County, *Government Valuation*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 276
  Codification of Laws, *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 194
  Congested Districts Board, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 388

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IRELAND—cont.
  Connemara
    Distress in, *Q.* Mr. W. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 385
    Evictions, *Q.* Mr. W. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1036
  Consolidation of Irish Acts, *Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 291
  Cork
    Charge of Larceny, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1427
    Dublin and, *Telephone Trunk Line*, *Q.* Mr. M Healy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 683
    Illegal Trawling, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. P. J. Power; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1559
    Kilcrea Abbey, *Q.* Dr. Tanner; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 682
    Queen's College, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1306
    Railways, *Q.* Dr. Tanner; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28,683
    Winter Assizes, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 25, 401
  Customs Outdoor Officers, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1294
  Daunt's Rock Lightship, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Jan* 21, 181. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Mr. T. Harrington; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 22, 273. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 405. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 28, 672
  Deportation of Paupers to Ireland, *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1052
  Distress
    Belmullet Union, *Qs.* Mr. D. Crilly; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 403; *Jan* 28, 681
    Connemara, *Q.* Mr. W. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 385
    Donegal (Western), *Q.* Mr. T. D. Sullivan; *A.* J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 282. *Q.* Mr. T. D. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 504
    Ireland (West of), *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 681
    Listowel Union, *Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1541
    Westport Union, *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. M. Davitt, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 174. *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1284
  District Lunatic Asylums, *Civil Service Retirement*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 386
  Divisional Police Commissioners, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1281
  Dog Licences, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 909
  Donegal
    Distress in, *Western*, *Q.* Mr. T. D. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 282. *Q.* Mr. T. D. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 504
    Finner Rifle Range, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1063. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 8, 1536

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Donegal*– cont.
  - *Petty Sessions*, *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill ; *As.* Mr. G, Balfour *Feb* 4, 1284
  - *Post Office, Trosses*, *Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 401
  - *Railway Extensions*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1309
- *Drawing, Irish Schools*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 382
- *Dublin*
  - *Cork and, Telephone Trunk Line*, *Q.* Mr. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 683
  - *Grangegorman Prison*, *Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 383
  - *Land Commission Office*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1291
  - *Police, Reserve Force*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1041
  - *Port Charges*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. L. Carew ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 279
  - *Post Office Female Clerks*, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 512
  - *Royal Barracks*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 29, 791
  - *Telegraph Facilities, Fairview*, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 407
- *Dublin Port and Docks Bill*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 794
- *Education*
  - *Fee Grant*, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox ; A. Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 282
  - *National Board of*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 391
  - *Technical*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 910
- *Enniskillen Fusiliers, Enlistment*, *Q.* Mr. J. Hammond ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 5, 1427
- *Erasmus Smith Schools*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 276. *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673. *Qs.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, Mr. W. Johnston ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1302
- *Evicted Tenants*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 179. *Q.* Mr. M. Healy ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 274. *Qs.* Mr. W. Abraham (Cork), Mr. J. Dillon, Captain Donelan ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1537
- *Evictions*
  - *Connemara*, *Q.* Mr. W. O'Malley ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1036
  - *Leitrim*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1419
- *Fair Rent*
  - *Agreements*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
  - *Applications, Monaghan*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly, Mr. M. McCartan ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 384
- *Fee Farm Tenants, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 390
- *Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland* (see that Title)
- *Finner Rifle Range, Donegal*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1063. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien ; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 8, 1536

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Floods, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1045
- *Government Valuation, Clare*, *Q.* Mr. T. M Healy ; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 276
- *Grangegorman Prison, Dublin*, *Qs.* Mr. J. L Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 383
- *Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. W. Johnston ; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 911. *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly ; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1047
- *Horse Breeding*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 388
- *Illegal Trawling*
  - *Cork*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. P. J. Power ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1559
  - *Irish Coast*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Gilhooly, Captain Donelan, Colonel Waring ; *As.* Mr. Macartney, Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 913. *Q.* Colonel Waring ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1056
- *Intermediate Education Exams.*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1290
- *Irish-speaking Witnesses*, *Q.* Mr. P. J. Power ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 403
- *Judicial Rents*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. M. McCartan ; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 180
- *Kerry County*
  - *Bog Slide*, *Q.* Mr. James Roche ; *A.* Mr. G Balfour *Jan* 28, 668
  - *Warden Estate*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 915
- *Kilcrea Abbey, Cork*, *Q.* Dr. Tanner ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 682
- *Labourers*
  - *Acts, Longford*, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1426
  - *Allotments*, *Qs.* Mr. M. Davitt ; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1554
  - *Cottages*, *Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 380
- *Land*
  - *Commission*
    - *Buchanan* v. *Cowell*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 921
    - *Leitrim*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673
    - *Office, Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1291
  - *Purchase, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 390
  - *Sub-Commissioners*, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 399
- *Lane-Fox Estate, Leitrim*, *Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. J. C. Flynn ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 5, 1423
- *Leitrim*
  - *Eviction*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1419
  - *Land Commission*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673
  - *Lane-Fox Estate*, *Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. J. C. Flynn ; [Mr. Speaker ;] *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 5, 1423
  - *Road Contracts*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh ; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1422
  - *South, Postal Arrangements*, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully ; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 502
- *Licensed Pawnbrokers*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly ; *A.* Mr G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 689

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Light Railways*, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1545
- *Lights Board*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Jan* 21, 190. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson, Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 22, 290. *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 29, 785. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. J. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 915
- *Lightship, Daunt's Rock*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Jan* 21, 181. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Mr. T. Harrington; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 22, 273. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 405. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 28, 672
- *Limerick*
  - *City, Postal Facilities*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 790
  - *Military Barracks*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 22, 280
  - *Post Office*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 21, 178
- *Listowel Union, Distress in*, *Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1541
- *Loan Fund*
  - *Acts*, *Qs.* Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson, Sir M. Hicks Beach *Jan* 22, 269
  - *Board*, *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 191
- *Loans to Tenants*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1044
- *Local Government*, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 922
- *Londonderry Corporation Stock*, *Qs.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 4, 1305; *Feb* 8, 1549
- *Longford*
  - *Fee Farm Tenants*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Parrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 390
  - *Floods*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1045
  - *Labourers' Acts*, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1426
  - *Land Purchase*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 390
  - *Postal Facilities*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 5, 1419
  - *Royal Canal Harbour*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1275
  - *School Accommodation, Letter-Gunnell*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1426
- *Mail Service*, *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. W. Field, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 393. *Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 683. *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1279
- *Mails, Irish*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 508. *Q.* Mr. J. L. Carew; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1055. *Qs.* Mr. James Roche, Captain Donelan, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 8, 1544
- *Medicine Contract, Mullingar Union*, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 502

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IRELAND—cont.

- *Military Barracks, Limerick*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 22, 280
- *Militia*, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 28, 677
- *Monaghan*
  - *Fair Rent Applications*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly, Mr. M. McCartan; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 384
  - *Newbliss Court-house*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1298
  - *Sanitary Accommodation, Clones*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
  - *Tenants' Holdings*, *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1052
- *Mountjoy Prison, Health of Prisoner*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 908
- *Mullingar Union, Medicine Contract*, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 502
- *Municipal Franchise*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 499
- *National*
  - *Board of Education*, *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien: *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 391
  - *Schools*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1050; *Feb* 4, 1300
- *Newbliss Court-house, Monaghan*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1298
- *Newry Board of Guardians*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 669. *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 787
- *Paupers, Deportation of, to Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1052
- *Pensions, School Teachers*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 278. *Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *As.* Mr. Hanbury, Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1049
- *Petty Sessions*
  - *Castlepollard*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1423
  - *Donegal*, *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1284
- *Police*
  - *Divisional Commissioners*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1281
  - *Reserve Force, Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1041
  - *Royal Irish Constabulary* (see below)
- *Pollen Fishery, Lough Neagh*, *Qs.* Mr. P. C. Doogan, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 912
- *Poor*
  - *Law Unions, Amalgamation of*, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
  - *Relief*, *Q.* Mr. J. Dillon; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 685
- *Port Charges, Dublin*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. L. Carew; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 279
- *Postal*
  - *Arrangements*
    - *Bournae, Tipperary County*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 497
    - *Cavan (West)*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 1, 901
    - *Leitrim (South)*, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 502
  - *Facilities, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 5, 1419

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IRELAND—cont.
- *Post Office*
  - *Accommodation, Thurles, Tipperary County,* *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 272
  - *Female Clerks, Dublin, Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 512
  - *Limerick, Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 21, 178
  - *Sligo, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 1, 906
  - *Trosses, Donegal County, Q.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 401
- *Prisons*
  - *Grangegorman, Dublin, Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew; Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 383
  - *Mountjoy, Health of Prisoner, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 908
  - *Service, Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 921
- *Private Bill Legislation, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1290
- *Probate Duty Grant, Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Jan* 21, 194
- *Protection of Ancient Monuments, Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 797
- *Public*
  - *Boards, Audit, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 389
  - *Works, Q.* Dr. Tanner; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 681
- *Purchase of Holdings, Q.* Mr. J. O'Kelly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 906
- *Queen's College, Cork, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1306
- *Railway*
  - *Connections, Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 381
  - *Extensions*
    - *Donegal, Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1309
    - *Ireland, Q.* Mr. J. Pinkerton; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1430
    - *Mid Cork, Q.* Dr. Tanner; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 683
  - *Rates, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 190. *Q.* Mr. J. Tuite; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 29, 797. *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1045
- *Railways* (see under Title RAILWAYS)
- *Resident Magistracy, Major N. Gosselin, Qs.* Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1307
- *Rifle Range, Finner, Donegal, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 2, 1063. *Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Feb* 8, 1536
- *River Suck Drainage, Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 399. *Q.* Mr. J. Roche; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 499
- *Road Contracts, Leitrim, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1422
- *Royal*
  - *Barracks, Dublin, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Powell-Williams *Jan* 29, 791
  - *Canal*
    - *Harbour, Longford, Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1275
    - *Repair of, Q.* Mr. J. Tuite; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 790

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- *Royal*—cont.
  - *Irish Constabulary, Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 400. *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 511. *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly, Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 671. *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1286
  - *Residence in, Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1311
- *Sanitary Accommodation, Clones, Monaghan, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
- *Schools*
  - *Accommodation, Letter-Gunnell, Longford, Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1426
  - *Attendance, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 289
  - *Erasmus Smith, Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 276. *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673. *Qs.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1302
  - *Irish, Drawing, Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 382
  - *Teachers' Pensions, Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 278. *Qs.* P. A. M'Hugh; *As.* Mr. Hanbury, Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1049
  - *Workmistresses, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1556
- *Secret Service Fund, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 22, 292
- *Seed Rate, Q.* Mr. E. Crean; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1428
- *Sligo*
  - *Abbey, Q.* Mr. B. Collery; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 407
  - *Post Office, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 1, 906
  - *Street Preaching in, Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. B. Collery, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 498
  - *Union, Q.* Mr. B. Collery; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 792
- *Solicitors' Licence Duty, Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Jan* 26, 495
- *Statutory Term Applications, Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 793
- *Stipendiary Magistrates, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 674
- *Street Preaching in Sligo, Qs.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. B. Collery, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 498
- *Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act, Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 291
- *Supply: Irish Estimates, Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1311
- *Taxation, Qs.* Mr. A. F. Jeffreys, Mr. A. O'Connor, Mr. T. Lough; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Jan* 25, 378
- *Technical Education, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 910
- *Telegraph Facilities, Fairview, Dublin, Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 407

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  - *Application for Re-instatement, Carlow*, *Q.* Mr. J. Hammond; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 675
  - *Fee Farm, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 390
  - *Holdings, Monaghan*, *Q.* Mr. J. Daly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1052
  - *Town*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 510
- *Tipperary County*
  - *Postal Arrangements, Bournae*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 497
  - *Post Office Accommodation, Thurles*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 272
- *Town Tenants*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 510
- *Training Ship, Belfast Lough*, *Q.* Mr. S. Young; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain *Jan* 29, 789
- *Transit of Cattle by Sea*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 509
- *Treasury Loans*, *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 787
- *Under-sheriffs*, *Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 791
- *Unions*
  - *Belmullet, Distress in*, *Q.* Mr. D. Crilly; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 403
  - *Listowel, Distress in*, *Q.* Mr. M. Austin; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1541
  - *Mullingar, Medicine Contract*, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 502
  - *Poor Law, Amalgamation of*, *Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
  - *Sligo*, *Q.* Mr. B. Collery; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 792
  - *Westport, Distress in*, *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1284
- *Voluntary School Grant (Irish Equivalent)*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Flynn; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 4, 1311
- *Warden Estate, Kerry*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 915
- *Waterford Bacon Trade Dispute*, *Qs.* Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 504
- *Westport Union, Distress in*, *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. M. Davitt, Mr. A. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 21, 174. *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. R. M. Dane; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1284
- *Workmistresses, Irish Schools*, *Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1556

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- Copy of Account of Receipts and Payments of Accountant General Pres. (*c.*) *Jan* 19, 40

ISAACSON, Mr. F. WOOTTON, *Tower Hamlets, Stepney*
- Election Petitions Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 295

JAMESON, Major J. EUSTACE, *Clare, W.*
- Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 249

JEBB, Mr. R. C., *Cambridge University*
- Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 3, 1220
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 959

JEFFREYS, Mr. A. F., *Hants, Basingstoke*
- Aldershot Autumn Manœuvres *Jan* 25, 378
- Land Tax *Jan* 29, 786
- Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 635
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- Taxation, Ireland *Jan* 25, 378

JOHNSTON, Mr. WILLIAM, *Belfast, S.*
- County Surveyors (Ireland) Amendment Bill, Intro. *Feb* 2, 1083
- Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act (1885) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 876
- Erasmus Smith Schools, Ireland *Feb* 4, 1302
- Great Northern of Ireland Railway *Feb* 1, 911
- Municipal Elections (Ireland) (Women) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 300
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JOHNSTONE, Mr. J. HEYWOOD, *Sussex, Horsham*
- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 4, 1359

JONES, Mr. D. BRYNMOR, *Swansea District*
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JONES, Mr. L. ATHERLEY- (see ATHERLEY-JONES)

JONES, Mr. W., *Carnarvon, Arfon*
- Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 691, 694

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- Army Pension: Kelly (John) *Jan* 28, 681
- Flogging Prisoners *Jan* 22, 282
- Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) (No. 2) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 27, 660
- Military Works Bill *Feb* 1, 1024
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- Royal Patriotic Fund *Feb* 2, 1034, 1066
- Sale of Food and Drugs Bill, Intro. *Jan* 27, 660

KEMP, Mr. G., *Lancashire, S.E., Heywood*
- Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 633
- Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 293

Kennaway, Right Hon. Sir John H., Bart., *Devonshire, Honiton*
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- Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1136

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- Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 9

Kenyon, Mr. James, *Bury, Lancashire*
- Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 631

Kilbride, Mr. Denis, *Galway, N.*
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Kimberley, Earl of
- Business of the House *Jan* 28, 662
- Indian Famine *Feb* 1, 898, 899
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- Exchange Compensation, India *Jan* 26, 506
- Indian Artillery and Engineers, Cadets *Feb* 2, 1040
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- Mauritius Police *Jan* 26, 510
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- Indian Famine *Feb* 1, 885; *Feb* 8, 1529

Knowles, Mr. Lees, *Salford, W.*
- Inebriates *Feb* 4, 1287
- Plumbers' Registration Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 295

Knox, Mr. E. F. Vesey, *Londonderry City*
- Agricultural Land Rating (Ireland) Bill *Jan* 28, 687
- Army Estimates: £255,300 for Volunteer Corps Capitation Grant (Supplementary) *Jan* 29, 843, 844, 847
- Barracks Act (1890) *Feb* 8, 1543
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- School Teachers' Pensions, Ireland *Jan* 22, 278
- Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1489
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Labouchere, Mr. Henry, *Northampton*
- Army Estimates: £145,000 for Pay of Indian Troops at Suakim (Supplementary) *Feb* 5, 1522
- Business of the House
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  - Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1070

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- Northampton Prison, Advertisements *Feb* 8, 1543
- Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 3, 1178, 1182, 1184, 1201, 1203, 1204
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- *c.* Intro., Mr. D. F. Goddard; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 299

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- *c.* Intro., Mr. W. Field; Read 1° *Jan* 25, 488

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- *Associations of Workmen, Contracts, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 5, 1433
- *Belfast Textile Trades, Fines, Qs.* Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 2, 1034
- *British Museum Staff, Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1046
- *Contracts* (see that Title)
- *Current Rate of Wages, Woolwich District, Qs.* Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 25, 408
- *Dangerous Trades, Q.* Mr. R. McKenna; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 386
- *Factories and Workshops Act (Particulars Section), Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 5, 1422
- *Factory*
  - *Accident, Batley, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 8, 1562
  - *Acts, Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 21, 184
- *Factory Acts (Fishing Trade) Bill* (see that Title)
- *Foundry Workers, Q.* Mr. J. McKillop; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 26, 494
- *Irish Lights Board, Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. J. O'Connor; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 915
- *Labour Department, Local Correspondence, Q.* Mr. H. H. Marks; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 922
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  - *Acts, Longford, Qs.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1426
  - *Allotments, Ireland, Qs.* Mr. M. Davitt; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1554
  - *Cottages, Ireland, Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 380
- *Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill* (see that Title)
- *Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries, Qs.* Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Bromley Davenport, Mr. Gibson Bowles; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1058
- *Privilege Cab System, Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 396
- *Shuttle Guards, Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 22, 284. *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 379. *Q.* Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 688
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    Imposition of Fines on, *Qs*. Mr. G. W. Wolff, Mr. J. Samuel; *As*. Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 409
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c. Intro., Mr. C. Harrison; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 298

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  Army, Increase of Strength *Feb* 4, 1246, 1265, 1267

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  Leaseholder's Purchase of Fee Simple Bill, Intro *Jan* 22, 300
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  Assize, *Special Commisioner of (Mr. Darling)*, *Qs*. Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As*. Sir R. Webster *Jan* 21, 196. Mr. C. J. Darling, (*Personal Explanation*) 200; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 200 *Jan* 21
  Assizes
    Committals to, *Qs*. Mr. A. O'Connor; *As*. Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 395
    Cork Winter, *Qs*. Mr. J. C. Flynn, Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As*. Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 25, 401
    Liverpool, *Housebreaking*, *Q*. Mr. H. Seton-Karr; *A*. Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 664
  Bacon Trade Dispute, *Waterford*, *Qs*. Mr. P. O'Brien; [Mr. Speaker;] *As*. Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 26, 504
  Charge of Larceny, *Cork*, *Q*. Mr. J. C. Flynn; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1427
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  Fair Rent
    Agreements, *Ireland*, *Q*. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1425
    Applications, *Monaghan*, *Qs*. Mr. J. Daly, Mr. M. McCartan; *As*. Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 384
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  Irish
    Land Commission (Buchanan v. *Cowell)*, *Q*. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 921
    Resident Magistracy (Major M. Gosselin), *Qs*. Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As*. Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1307
  Irish-speaking Witnesses, *Q*. Mr. P. J. Power; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 403
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    Eviction, *Q*. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1419
    Land Commission, *Q*. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673
    Lane-Fox Estate, *Qs*. Mr. P. A. M'Hugh, Mr. J. C. Flynn; [Mr. Speaker;] *As*. Mr. J. Atkinson *Feb* 5, 1423
  Licensed Premises, *Advertisements*, *Q*. Mr. S Young; *A*. Sir R. Webster *Feb* 4, 1310
  Manslaughter at Manchester, *Q*. Mr. C. E. Schwann; *A*. Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 2, 1039
  Mauritius Police, *Q*. Sir H. S. King; *A*. Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 26, 510
  Musgrave Street Police Barracks, *Belfast*, *Q*. Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A*. Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1307
  National Portrait Gallery, *Police Protection*, *Q*. Lord Balcarres; *A*. Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 782
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  - *Barracks, Musgrave Street, Belfast, Q.* Mr. G. W. Wolff; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1307
  - *Divisional Commissioners, Ireland, Q.* Mr. D. Macaleese; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1281
  - *Mauritius, Q.* Sir H. S. King; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 26, 510
  - *Protection, National Portrait Gallery, Q.* Lord Balcarres; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 782
  - *Reserve Force, Dublin, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1041
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- *Prisoners*
  - *Flogging, Qs.* Mr. J. A. Pease, Mr. M. Healy, Mr. J. Morley, Sir W. Lawson, Sir J. F. Leese, Mr. H. E. Kearley; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 22, 280
  - *Property Fund, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1309
  - *Treason-felony* (see below)
- *Prisons*
  - *Grangegorman, Dublin, Qs.* Mr. J. L. Carew, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 383
  - *Mountjoy, Health of Prisoner, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 908
  - *Northampton, Advertisements, Q.* Mr. H. Labouchere; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 8, 1543
  - *Officers' Instruction, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 671
  - *Service, Ireland, Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 921
  - *Visiting Committees, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 670
- *Royal Irish Constabulary, Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 400. *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Jan* 26, 511. *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly, Mr. R. M. Dane, Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 671. *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough, Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1286
- *Settled Property, Estate Duty, Q.* Captain Pretyman; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 8, 1547
- *Special Commissioner of Assize (Mr. Darling), Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Sir R. Webster, *Jan* 21, 196. Mr. C. J. Darling, (*Personal Explanation*) 200; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 200 *Jan* 21
- *Statutory Term Applications, Ireland, Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 793
- *Stipendiary Magistrates, Ireland, Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 674
- *Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act, Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 291
- *Tenant's Application for Re-instatement, Carlow, Q.* Mr. J. Hammond; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 675
- *Treason-felony Prisoners*
  - *Duff, Q.* Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 667

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LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE—cont.

- *Treason-felony Prisoners*—cont.
  - *Fetherstone and Flanagan, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Sir Matthew White-Ridley *Jan* 26, 509
  - *Queen's Reign, Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 28, 690; *Feb* 5, 1435
- *Under-sheriffs, Ireland, Q.* Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 791
- *Unlawful Possession Bill* (see that Title)

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill

- *c.* Sir R. Webster, (*Motion for leave to Intro.*) 268; Mr. T. M. Healy, 268 *Jan* 21
- Debate Resumed: Mr. T. M. Healy, 874; Sir R. Webster, 875 *Jan* 29
- Intro., Sir R. Webster; Read 1° *Jan* 29, 875

Law of Libel Amendment Bill

- *c.* Intro., Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 299

Lawrence, Mr. E., *Cornwall, Truro*

- Business of the House: Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1070
- Notice of Motion *Jan* 27, 602

Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, Bt., *Cumberland, Cockermouth*

- Arabi Pasha *Feb* 8, 1546
- Armenian Refugee Killed in London *Jan* 28, 667
- British South Africa Committee *Jan* 29, 826
- Business of the House *Jan* 28, 780
- Flogging Prisoners *Jan* 22, 282
- Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, House of Commons Committee *Jan* 29, 882
- Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 3, 1195, 1211
- Sale of Intoxicants, Houses of Parliament *Jan* 21, 197; *Feb* 5, 1434

Leaseholders' Purchase of Fee Simple Bill

- *c.* Intro., General Laurie; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 300

Leaseholders' Purchase of Fee Simple (No. 2) Bill

- *c.* Intro., Mr. H. E. Kearley; Read 1° *Jan* 27, 660

Lea, Sir Thomas, Bart., *Londonderry, S.*

- Assistant County Surveyors (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 302

Lecky, Mr. W. E. Hartpole, *Dublin University*

- Queen's Speech *Jan* 22, 313
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, Intro. *June* 22, 295
- University Education of Roman Catholics *Jan* 28, 690

LEESE, Sir JOSEPH F., *Lancashire, N.E., Accrington*
Flogging Prisoners *Jan* 22, 282
Members of Parliament (Vacation of Seats) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 297
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 999

LEES, Mr. ELLIOTT, *Birkenhead*
Parliamentary Elections (Mariners' Votes) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 300

LENG, Sir JOHN, *Dundee*
Grocers' Certificate (Scotland) Abolition Bill, Intro. *Jan* 26, 515
Local Government Board, Audit Department *Jan* 22, 279
Mail Service
  Bag Seals *Feb* 4, 1272
  Canadian *Jan* 25, 380
Peterhead Harbour *Feb* 4, 1272
Queen's Speech *Jan* 20, 140; *Jan* 25, 451
Shuttle Guards *Jan* 25, 379

Licences (Ireland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. D. Crilly; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 303

Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill
c. Intro., Mr. T. P. Whittaker; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 296

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Hedderwick; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 298

LLOYD-GEORGE, Mr. DAVID, *Carnarvon Boroughs*
Notice of Motion *Jan* 27, 602
Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 740, 742, 745, 746
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1149

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. L. Wanklyn; Read 1° *Jan* 25, 488

Local Government Act (1894) Amendment Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. Hobhouse; Read 1° *Jan* 27, 659

Local Government (Aldershot and Farnborough) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Powell-Williams; Read 1° *Feb* 8, 1639

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD
President—Mr. H. CHAPLIN
Secretary—Mr. T. W. RUSSELL

Agricultural Rates Order, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 687
Audit Department, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 22, 279. *Q.* Mr. P. A. M'Hugh; *A.* G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 389
Board of Guardians, Belfast, *Q.* Mr. M. McCartan; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 391
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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—cont.
Children's Metropolitan Asylums Board, *Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 8, 1548
Cholera Outbreak, s.s. Nubia, *Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 22, 288
Cottage Gardens, *Qs.* Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1281
Elementary Schools, Rating, *Qs.* Mr. Ellis Griffith; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 8, 1550
Gloucester, Small-pox Epidemic, *Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1291
Incorporation, Metropolitan Districts, *Qs.* Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 1, 910
Light Locomotives Act, Traction Engines, *Q.* Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 668
Parish
  Council
    Accounts, *Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 22, 277
    Elections, *Q.* Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 684. *Qs.* Sir B. W. Foster; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 2, 1056
  Documents, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 8, 1551
Poor Law Schools
  Metropolis, *Qs.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1310; *Feb* 5, 1433; *Feb.* 8, 1552
  Report of Departmental Committee, *Qs.* Mr. G. Drage, Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 1, 902
Port Precautions against Disease, *Qs.* Sir H. S. King, Sir B. W. Foster; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach, Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 26, 506
Sheffield Cottage Homes for Children, *Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1309
Small-pox Epidemic, Gloucester, *Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1291
Traction Engines, Light Locomotives Act, *Q.* Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 668
Vaccination
  Laws, *Q.* General Russell; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 8, 1540
  Medical Officers, *Q.* Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 2, 1043
  Officers' Fees, *Q.* Mr. L. R. Holland; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 1, 923
  Prosecutions, *Qs.* Mr. J. W. Logan, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 21, 192
  Royal Commission, *Qs.* Mr. T. Bayley, Dr. Farquharson; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 26, 493. *Q.* Mr. J. W. Logan; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 677
Water Supply, Rural Districts, *Qs.* Sir Cameron Gull; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1274
Weak-minded and Imbecile Children, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Talbot; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1296

Local Government Elections Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. C. F. Luttrell; Read 1° *Jan* 28, 780
Read 2° and com. *Feb* 1, 1026
In Com., Rep. without Amendt. *Feb* 2, 1172
Read 3° *Feb* 2, 1172
l. Read 1ª *Feb* 4, 1243

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. Atkinson; Read 1° *Jan* 20, 121

LOCKWOOD, Colonel A., *Essex, Epping*
Guards (The) in the Mediterranean *Feb* 8, 1629
Health of Troops in India *Jan* 25, 397, 398
Wreck of Indian Troopship *Warren Hastings* *Jan* 25, 383

LOGAN, Mr. J. W., *Leicester, Harborough*
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 637, 640
Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 712
Sale of Intoxicants, Houses of Parliament *Jan* 21, 198
Vaccination, Royal Commission *Jan* 21, 192, 193: *Jan* 28, 677

London (Borough Road, Southwark) Provisional Order Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Jesse Collings; Read 1° *Jan* 20, 121

London (Churchway, St. Pancras) Provisional Order Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Jesse Collings; Read 1° *Jan* 20, 121

London (Clare Market, Strand) Provisional Order Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Jesse Collings; Read 1° *Feb* 3, 1173

London Water Companies Amalgamation Bill
c. Intro., Sir F. Dixon-Hartland; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 302

LONG, RIGHT HON. WALTER H. (President of the Board of Agriculture), *Liverpool, West Derby*
Carriage of Animals, Channel Traffic *Jan* 22, 289
Dog Muzzling, Metropolis *Feb* 1, 920

LOUGH, Mr. THOMAS, *Islington, W.*
Adjournment *Feb* 5, 1528
Army Estimates
  £145,000 for Pay of Indian Troops at Suakim (Supplementary) *Feb* 5, 1521
  £255,300 for Volunteer Corps, Capitation Grant (Supplementary) *Jan* 29, 845
Barracks Act (1890) *Feb* 8, 1542, 1543
Business of the House
  General *Jan* 20, 122
  Supply *Jan* 29, 832
  Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1074
Collection of Licences *Feb* 4, 1285
Electric Meters *Jan* 22, 270
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Jan* 21, 199
Gas Meters *Jan* 22, 271
Incorporation, Metropolitan Districts *Feb* 1, 910, 911
India Famine and Plague *Jan* 21, 176, 177
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 616, 620

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LOUGH, Mr. THOMAS—*cont.*
Military Works Bill *Jan* 29, 866, 867; *Feb* 1, 1020; *Feb* 8, 1542
Poor Law Schools *Feb* 1, 904
Privilege Cab System *Jan* 25, 396
Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 244, 245, 246; *Jan* 25, 455
Royal Irish Constabulary *Feb* 4, 1286
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1517
Taxation (Ireland) *Jan* 25, 379
Unlawful Possession Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 878
Vaccination *Jan* 21, 193
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 1028; *Feb* 2, 1150, 1151; *Feb* 8, 1640

LOWTHER, MR. J. W. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cumberland, Penrith*
Private Bills *Feb* 2, 1030

(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)
Army Estimates: £255,300 for Volunteer Corps Capitation Grant (Supplementary)
  The Chairman said, the hon. Member would be quite out of order in discussing the general question on that Vote. The hon. Member must strictly confine himself to the limits of the items of the Vote which was then presented to the Committee *Jan* 29, 843
  The Chairman said: "Order, order! That argument is applicable to the original Vote. It does not apply to this part. The hon. Member must confine himself strictly to this Supplementary Estimate. He must not discuss the general principles of Volunteer Corps or whether the money applied to Volunteer Corps should be applicable to Ireland or not. It does not arise on this Vote." *Jan* 29, 843
  The Chairman said it would not be in order to discuss that matter, which was not included in the Vote. It was not the capitation grant that came under discussion, only the supplementary grant *Jan* 29, 845
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government
  The Chairman said: "As I informed the hon. Member the last time he tried to raise that question, it would be distinctly out of order on a Supplementary Estimate" *Feb* 5, 1489
  The Chairman said: "The matter cannot be discussed on this Vote; it is not relevant. Even if the hon. Member succeeded in diminishing the amount it would not relieve Ireland from contributing her share." *Feb* 5, 1489
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant)
  The Chairman said: "The hon. Member is not addressing himself to the Amendment. There may be reasons why the Amendment should be accepted, but the hon. Gentleman is not dealing with the Amendment at all. He is urging no reason why it should be accepted in place of the original Motion." *Feb* 2, 1151

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LOWTHER, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*
(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)—cont.
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant)—cont.
The Chairman said: "The process is not so elaborate as the hon. Member seems to think it is. If he will look at Rule I. he will observe that the Closure may be moved 'on the interruption of business.' It was moved on the interruption of business. The interruption of business took place when the hon. Member objected to my putting the Question. That was the interruption of business, and thereupon the Closure was moved according to Rule I. The Question is, That the Question be now put." *Feb* 2, 1162
Miscellaneous Rulings—*Feb* 1, 1019; *Feb* 2, 1155, 1161

LOWTHER, RIGHT HON. JAMES, *Kent, Isle of Thanet*
Elections, Interference of Peers in *Jan* 19, 38
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 622, 625, 638
Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 750, 753, 754, 755; *Feb* 2, 1058, 1060
Queen's Speech *Jan* 22, 373, 374
Reform Prisoners at Pretoria *Jan* 21, 183

LOYD, Mr. A. K., *Berks, Abingdon*
Elementary Schools (Parliamentary Grant) *Jan* 26, 494

LUBBOCK, Right Hon. Sir JOHN, Bart., *London University*
British South Africa Committee *Jan* 28, 775; *Jan* 29, 826
Business of the House: Supply *Jan* 29, 839
Shops (Early Closing) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 303
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 1000, 1002

LUCAS-SHADWELL, Mr. W., *Hastings*
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 633
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1142

Lunacy
Alien Pauper Lunatic, Scotland, Q. Sir M. Stewart; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 28, 685
District Asylums, Civil Service Retirement, Q. Mr. R. M. Dane; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 25, 386
Insanity, Qs. Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. Vesey Knox; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Feb* 4, 1282
Weak-minded and Imbecile Children, Q. Mr. J. G. Talbot; *A.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 4, 1296.

LUTTRELL, Mr. H. C. FOWNES, *Devonshire, Tavistock*
Inland Money Orders, *Feb* 5 1428, 1429
Parish Council Elections *Jan* 28, 684

LYTTELTON, Hon. ALFRED, *Warwick and Leamington*
Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 46

MACALEESE, Mr. D., *Monaghan, N.*
Divisional Police Commissioners, Ireland *Feb* 4, 1281
Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland *Feb* 8, 1545
Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland *Feb* 1, 911
Newbliss Court-house, Monaghan *Feb* 4, 1298
Sanitary Accommodation, Clones, Monaghan *Feb* 5, 1425
Workmistresses, Ireland *Feb* 8, 1556

MCARTHUR, Mr. W. A., *Cornwall, St. Austell*
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1498, 1499

MACARTNEY, MR. W. G. ELLISON (Secretary to the Admiralty), *Antrim, S.*
Belleville Boilers *Jan* 26, 513
Illegal Trawling, Irish Coast *Feb* 1, 913
Naval
  Outfit *Feb* 4, 1292
  Pensions *Jan* 26, 512
  Repairs, *H.M.S. Black Prince Jan* 26, 513
  Reserve *Jan* 26, 509
Troopships, Ballasting *Feb* 1, 905
Unification of Time at Sea *Jan* 21, 191

MCCALMONT, General HUGH, *Antrim, N.*
Military Forces (Maintenance) *Feb* 8, 1605

MCCARTAN, Mr. M., *Down, S.*
Belfast Board of Guardians *Jan* 25, 391
Fair Rent Applications, Monaghan *Jan* 25, 384
Judicial Rents, Ireland *Jan* 21, 180
Land Sub-Commissioners *Jan* 25, 399
Queen's Speech, *Jan* 21, 238

MACDONA, Mr. J. CUMMING, *Southwark, Rotherhithe*
Floating Derelicts *Feb* 2, 1034
Notice of Motion *Jan* 27, 602
Parish Registers Bill, Intro. *Jan* 26, 516
Railway Return Tickets Bill, Intro. *Feb* 8, 1639

M'HUGH, Mr. P. A., *Leitrim, N.*
Agricultural Prices, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1035
Army Contracts, Ireland *Jan* 29, 788
Catholic University, Ireland *Feb* 1, 925
Congested Districts Board, Ireland *Jan* 25, 388
Horse Breeding, Ireland *Jan* 25, 388
Irish Public Boards, Audit *Jan* 25, 389
Leitrim
  Eviction *Feb* 5, 1419
  Land Commission *Jan* 28, 673
  Lane-Fox Estate *Feb* 5, 1423
  Road Contracts *Feb* 5, 1422
Loans to Tenants, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1044
Newry Board of Guardians *Jan* 29, 787
Police Reserve Forces, Dublin *Feb* 2, 1041
Private Bill Legislation *Feb* 4, 1290
Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 210
Royal Irish Constabulary *Jan* 28, 671
School Teachers' Pensions, Ireland *Feb* 2, 1049
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M‘Hugh, Mr. P. A.—*cont.*
  Sligo
    Post Office *Feb* 1, 906
    Street Preaching in *Jan* 26, 498
  Stipendiary Magistrates, Ireland *Jan* 28, 674
  Technical Education, Ireland *Feb* 1, 910
  Treasury Loans, Ireland *Jan* 29, 787
  Unlawful Possession Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 879, 880, 881

McIver, Sir Lewis, Bart., *Edinburgh, W.*
  Police (Scotland) Law Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 303

McKenna, Mr. R., *Monmouthshire, N.*
  Dangerous Trades *Jan* 25, 386
  Notice of Motion *Jan* 27, 601
  Queen's Speech *Jan* 26, 560
  Unlawful Possession Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 879

McKillop, Mr. James, *Stirlingshire*
  Foundry Workers *Jan* 26, 494

Maclean, Mr. J. M., *Cardiff*
  British South Africa
    Committee *Jan* 26, 514; *Jan* 28, 762; *Jan* 29, 822
    Company *Jan* 20, 172
  Indian Famine
    Plague, and *Jan* 21, 178; *Jan* 22, 287
    Sale of Silver *Jan* 26, 507
  Queen's Speech *Jan* 26, 546, 548
  Reform Prisoners at Pretoria *Jan* 21, 183; *Feb* 4, 1296
  Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 651, 652

McLeod, Mr. John, *Sutherland*
  Mediterranean Garrison, Brigade of Guards *Feb* 4, 1278
  Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 625
  Queen's Speech *Jan* 22, 346
  Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 4, 1409, 1410

Maclure, Mr. J. W., *Lancashire, S.E., Stretford*
  Unlawful Possession Bill, 2R. *Jan* 29, 881

MacNeill, Mr. J. G. Swift, *Donegal, S.*
  Barracks Act (1890) *Feb* 8, 1543
  Cork Winter Assizes *Jan* 25, 402
  Donegal
    Petty Sessions *Feb* 4, 1284, 1285
    Post Office, Trosses *Jan* 25, 401
  Experiments on Living Animals *Feb* 4, 1287, 1288, 1289; *Feb* 5, 1431
  Irish Resident Magistracy *Feb* 4, 1307
  Lighthouse Keepers *Feb* 2, 1064
  Loan Fund Board, Ireland *Jan* 21, 191
  Queen's
    Reign (Treason-felony Prisoners) *Jan* 28, 690; *Feb* 5, 1435
    Speech *Jan* 21, 262
  Relief of Kassala *Feb* 8, 1557, 1558
  Royal Irish Constabulary *Jan* 25, 400, 401; *Jan* 26, 511; *Feb* 4, 1286
  Special Commissioner of Assize (Mr. Darling) *Jan* 21, 196, 197
  Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 2, 1161

Manhood Suffrage (Ireland) Bill
  c. Intro., Mr. J. H. Parnell: Read 1° *Jan* 22, 302

Maple, Sir J. Blundell, *Camberwell, Dulwich*
  School Board for London (Elections) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 297

Marine Insurance Bill
  l. Pres., Lord Herschell; Read 1ª *Feb* 4, 1241

Marks, Mr. Harry H., *Tower Hamlets, St. George's in the East*
  Labour Department, Local Correspondents *Feb* 1, 922
  Rating of Government Property, London *Feb* 4, 1308
  Service Franchise Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 294

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
  c. Intro., Mr. A. Spicer; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 297

Married Persons Small Industrial Incomes (Tax Relief) Bill
  c. Intro., Mr. G. C. T. Bartley; Read 1° *Feb* 1, 1027

Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F. B., *Finsbury, Central*
  South Kensington Museum *Feb* 1, 923

Members of Parliament (Vacation of Seats) Bill
  c. Intro., Sir J. F. Leese; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 297

Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill
  c. Intro., Sir H. Vincent; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 302
    2R., Sir H. Vincent, 602, 604, 608, 611, 616, 618, 620, 632, 640, 641, 642; Sir J. Woodhouse, 604; Mr. A. F. Godson, 605; Mr. Ritchie, 605, 608, 609; Mr. J. Bryce, 608, 609, 618; Mr. T. P. Whittaker, 610, 611; Sir A. K. Rollit, 613, (*Motion*) 616, 620; Mr. T. Lough, 616, 620; [Mr. Speaker, 616, 619, 644;] Mr. W. Field, 616; Sir W. Harcourt, 617, 618; Sir F. S. Powell, 619; (*Motion withdrawn*, 620); Mr. R. Purvis, 622; Mr. J. Lowther, 622, 625, 638; Mr. J. McLeod, 625; Mr. A. J. Mundella, 626, 628; Mr. Gibson Bowles, 628; Mr. F. A. Channing, 631; Mr. J. Kenyon, 631; Colonel Milward, 631, 632; Mr. G. Kemp, 633; Mr. Lucas-Shadwell, 633; Mr. A. F. Jeffreys, 635; Mr. G. Whiteley, 635; Mr. J. W. Logan, 637, 640; Sir W. Hart Dyke, 638; Mr. Jesse Collings, 640, 641, 642; (*Division*, 644) *Jan* 27
    2R. negatived *Jan* 27, 644

MERCHANT SHIPPING
  Balintore Harbour, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
  Carriage of Animals, Channel Traffic, Q. Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. W. Long *Jan* 22, 289
  Cholera Outbreak, s.s. Nubia, Q. Sir B. W. Foster; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 22, 288
  Coal Shipments, Q. Mr. D. A. Thomas; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 26, 496

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MERCHANT SHIPPING—cont.

- *Collisions at Sea*
  - *New Regulations*, *Q.* Mr. Gibson Bowles; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 29, 795
  - *Steamship Siren with H.M. Gunboat Landrail*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Jan* 28, 677
- *Colour-blind Tests, Sailors*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Ambrose, Mr. G. W. Wolff; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 907
- *Costa Rica Packet Case*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Jan* 26, 498
- *Daunt's Rock Lightship*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Jan* 21, 181. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Mr. T. Harrington; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 22, 273. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 405. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 28, 672
- *Dublin Port and Docks Bill*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 29, 794
- *Dublin, Port Charges*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. L. Carew; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 279
- *Duty on Scotch Herrings*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 2, 1039
- *Harbours*
  - *Balintore*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
  - *Peterhead*, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1272
  - *Port Ness, Island of Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
  - *Royal Canal, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1275
- *Illegal*
  - *Supply of Seamen, Glasgow*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. A. Baird; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1283
  - *Trawling*
    - *Cork*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. P. J. Power; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1559
    - *Irish Coast*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Gilhooly, Captain Donelan, Colonel Waring; *As.* Mr. Macartney, Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 913. *Q.* Colonel Waring; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1056
    - *Penalties*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 21, 193
    - *Scotland*, *Qs.* Mr. D. N. Nicol, Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 28, 675. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 2, 1036; *Feb* 4, 1287
- *Injuries to Workmen, Foreign Shipowners*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Flannery; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 685
- *Irish Lights Board*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Jan* 21, 190. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson, Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 22, 290. *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 29, 785
- *Island of Lewis*
  - *Port Ness Harbour*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
  - *Tiumpan Head Lighthouse*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1048
- *Lighthouse*
  - *Keepers*, *Qs.* Mr. Swift MacNeill, General Laurie; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1064
  - *Tiumpan Head, Island of Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1048

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- *Lightship, Daunt's Rock*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Jan* 21, 181. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Mr. T. Harrington; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 22, 273. *Qs.* Mr. M. Healy, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 405. *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 28, 672
- *Loss of Life at Sea, Mercantile Marine*, *Qs.* Colonel Denny, Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1300
- *Mail Contract Subsidies*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 1, 919
- *Mercantile Marine*
  - *Classification*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 919
  - *Loss of Life at Sea*, *Qs.* Colonel Denny, Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1300
- *Missing Steamer, State of Georgia*, *Q.* Mr. J. Bryce; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Jan* 28, 689
- *North Sea Convention*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Captain Sinclair; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray, Mr. Curzon *Feb* 8, 1539
- *Peterhead Harbour*, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1272
- *Pollen Fishery, Lough Neagh*, *Qs.* Mr. P. C. Doogan, Mr. J. Dillon; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 1, 912
- *Port Charges, Dublin*, *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. L. Carew; *As.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 279
- *Port Ness Harbour, Island of Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
- *Quarantine*, *Qs.* Sir W. Wedderburn, Sir B. W. Foster; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 5, 1420
- *Royal Canal Harbour, Longford*, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1275
- *Shipping*
  - *Maritime Property, and (Compensation for Injury)*, *Q.* Sir J. Colomb; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 1, 925
  - *Masters at Antwerp*, *Q.* Mr. T. P. Whittaker; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 1, 900
- *Siren, Steamship, Collision with H.M. Gunboat Landrail*, *Q.* Mr. J. Gilhooly; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Jan* 28, 677
- *State of Georgia, Missing Steamer*, *Q.* Mr. J. Bryce; *A.* Mr. G. J. Goschen *Jan* 28, 689
- *Tiumpan Head Lighthouse, Island of Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1048

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- *c.* Intro., Mr. W. Field; Read 1° *Jan* 27, 660

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- Army, Increase of Strength *Feb* 4, 1263

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- *Armenian Refugee Killed in London*, *Qs.* Sir W. Lawson, Mr. J. O'Kelly; *As.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 28, 667
- *Bethnal Green, St. Jude's School*, *Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Jan* 25, 385
- *Birth Certificates*, *Q.* Mr. E. Boulnois; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 663
- *British Museum Staff*, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1046

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  Members' Smoking Accommodation (Commons), *Qs.* Mr. G. Wolff, Mr. Rees Davies; *As.* Mr. Akers-Douglas *Feb* 4, 1302
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Wimbledon Elementary Schools, *Q.* Mr. J. C. Williams; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 4, 1289

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Sessional Order (*c.*) *Jan* 19, 39

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill
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On Motion, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair: Sir C. Dilke, (*Amendt.*) 1565, 1569, 1586, 1587, 1589; Mr. Brodrick, 1569, 1582, 1586, 1587, 1589, 1605; Major Rasch, 1578; Sir H. Havelock-Allan, 1591; Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, 1593, 1597; Mr. G. J. Goschen, 1597; Mr. A. M. Brookfield, 1598; Sir J. Colomb, 1601; General McCalmont, 1605; Sir E. T. Gourley, 1608; Colonel Sandys, 1609, 1611; [Mr. Speaker, 1611, 1614;] Captain Pirie, 1611, 1614; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1615; Mr. Arnold-Forster, 1615; Mr. W. Allan, 1618; Colonel Welby, 1619; Mr. T. C. T. Warner, 1622; General Russell, 1623; Mr. R. G. Webster, 1624; (*Division*, 1626) *Feb* 8

Military Lands Act (1892) Amendment Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Brodrick; Read 1° *Feb* 1, 926

Military Works Bill (Schedule of Proposed Works)
Copy Pres. (*c.*) *Feb* 1, 1027

Military Works Bill
c. In Com., Mr. Brodrick, (*Motion*) 848, 867, 872; Sir C. Dilke, 860; Sir J. Colomb, 862; Mr. T. Lough, 866, 867; General Laurie, 869; Mr. W. Allan, 870; Colonel Welby, 871, 872; Mr. J. G. Weir, 873. Motion Agreed to, 874 *Jan* 29
On Rep. of Reso.: Mr. T. Lough, 1020; Mr. Brodrick, 1020; Sir C. Dilke, 1021; Sir J. Colomb, 1022; Sir W. Harcourt, 1022; Sir M. Hicks Beach, 1023; Mr. J. Dillon, 1023; Mr. H. E. Kearley, 1024; Mr. Vesey Knox, 1024; Dr. Tanner, 1024; (*Division*, 1024) *Feb* 1
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Episcopal Elections, Discreditable Scenes, *Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1312
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    Colonies, *Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 29, 800
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Jan 28—Augustus Henry Eden Allhusen, esquire, for *Borough of Salisbury*

Feb 4—Captain John Sinclair, for *County of Forfar*

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Jan 19—*For* the City of Salisbury *v.* Edward Henry Hulse, esquire (Manor of Northstead)

For the County of Forfar *v.* James Martin White, esquire (Chiltern Hundreds

Jan 20—*For* the County of Essex (Walthamstow Division) *v.* Edmund Widdrington Byrne, esquire, Q.C., one of the Justices of the High Court

For the County of Essex (Southern or Romford Division) *v.* Alfred Money Wigram, esquire (Chiltern Hundreds)

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Stornoway, Mail Service, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1275

Swansea Post Office, *Q.* Mr. Brynmor Jones; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1273

Switzerland, Parcels Post, *Q.* Colonel Milward; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 666

Telegraph

Facilities

Fairview, Dublin, *Q.* Mr. J. J. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 407

Limerick City, *Q.* Mr. F. A. O'Keeffe; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 790

Postal Services, and (Revenue), *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 8, 1535

Service, Ireland, *Q.* Mr. J. Tully; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 283

Telephone

Service, Tunbridge Wells, *Q.* Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1038

Trunk Line, Cork and Dublin, *Q.* Mr. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 28, 683

Tipperary

Postal Arrangements, Bournae, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 26, 497

Post Office Accommodation, Thurles, *Q.* Mr. J. F. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 22, 272

Tunbridge Wells, Telephone Service, *Q.* Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1038

Post Office Consolidation Bill

l. Pres., Duke of Norfolk; Read 1^{a} *Feb* 2, 1029
Read 2^{a} *Feb* 5, 1417

Post Office (Four-mile Radius)

Mr. C. T. Giles (*Notice of Motion*) *Feb* 2, 1033

POWELL, Sir FRANCIS S., Bart., *Wigan*

Business of the House: Supply *Jan* 29, 842
Merchandise Marks Acts (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 619
Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries *Jan* 28, 718
Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill, Intro. *Jan* 26, 516
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 996; *Feb* 2, 1143

POWELL-WILLIAMS, Mr. J. (see WILLIAMS)

POWER, Mr. P. J., *Waterford, E.*

Illegal Trawling, Cork *Feb* 8, 1559
Irish Mail Service *Jan* 25, 394
Irish-speaking Witnesses *Jan* 25, 403
Queen's Speech *Jan* 26, 571

Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment Bill

c. Intro., Mr. G. Kemp; Read 1^{o} *Jan* 22, 293

Preferential Payments Bankruptcy Act (1888) Amendment (No. 2) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. R. Ascroft; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 300

PRETYMAN, Captain ERNEST GEORGE, *Suffolk, Woodbridge*
Settled Property, Estate Duty *Feb* 8, 1547

Prisons (see LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE)
(For Irish Questions see under Title IRELAND)

PROVAND, Mr. ANDREW D., *Glasgow, Blackfriars*
Queen's Speech *Jan* 22, 356; *Jan* 25, 471

Public Health (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Graham Murray, 488; Mr. G. Lambert, 488; [Mr. Speaker, 488] *Jan* 25
Read 1° *Jan* 25, 488
2R., Dr. Farquharson, 1524; Sir M. Stewart, 1525; Mr. T. R. Buchanan, 1525; Mr. A. Cross, 1526; Mr. R. B. Haldane, 1526; Mr. J. H. Dalziel, 1527; Sir R. B. Finlay, 1527 *Feb* 5

PURVIS, Mr. ROBERT, *Peterborough*
Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill, 2R. *Jan* 27, 622

PYM, Mr. C. GUY, *Bedford*
Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act (1896) Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 304

Queen's Speech (see PARLIAMENT: LORDS; COMMONS)

Railway Return Tickets Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. C. Macdona; Read 1° *Feb* 8, 1639

RAILWAYS
Cavan and Leitrim Light, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1275
Congo, Native Labour, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Jan* 29, 781
Connections, Ireland, *Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 381
Extensions
  Donegal, *Q.* Mr. Vesey Knox; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1309
  Ireland, *Q.* Mr. J. Pinkerton; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1430
Fishguard Bay, *Q.* Mr. Rees Davies; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 389
Great Northern Company of Ireland, *Qs.* Mr. D. Macaleese, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 1, 911. *Qs.* Mr. J. Daly; *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1047
Light
  Cavan and Leitrim, *Q.* Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1275
  Ireland, *Q.* Dr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 8, 1545

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Maps, *Q.* Mr. Tomlinson; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 29, 789
Metropolitan, Ventilation, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1276
Mid Cork, *Q.* Dr. Tanner; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 683
Privilege Cab System, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Sir Matthew White Ridley *Jan* 25, 396
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Sierra Leone, *Q.* Mr. C. Bill; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain *Feb* 1, 920
Tralee and Dingle, *Q.* Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 25, 381

RANKIN, Mr. J., *Hereford, Leominster*
Corn Sales Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 303

RASCH, Major F. C., *Essex, S.E.*
Army Officers' Uniform *Feb* 2, 1053
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Militia Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 301
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Rating of Machinery Bill
c. Intro., Mr. E. Strachey; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 297

Rating of Machinery Suspensory Bill
c. Intro., Mr. G. Whiteley; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 296

Rating (Places of Worship and Schools) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. W. D. Green; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 298

RECKITT, Mr. H. J., *Lincolnshire, Brigg*
Employers' Liability (Foreign Shipowners) Amendment Bill, Intro. *Jan* 26, 516

Registration of Firms Bill
c. Intro., Sir Stafford Northcote; Read 1° *Feb* 5, 1436

Registration of Parliamentary Voters Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. Brigg; Read 1° *Feb* 5, 1436

REID, Sir R. T., *Dumfries Burghs*
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RICHARDS, Mr. HENRY C., *Finsbury, E.*
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RICKETT, Mr. J. COMPTON, *Scarborough*
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Belfast Textile Trades, Fines *Feb* 2, 1034
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RITCHIE, RIGHT HON. CHARLES T. (President of the Board of Trade), *Croydon*
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ROBERTS, MR. J. BRYN, *Carnarvon, Eifion*
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ROBERTS, MR. J. HERBERT, *Denbigh, W.*
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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill
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c. Intro., Mr. H. Seton-Karr; Read 1° *Feb* 5, 1436

SAMUEL, Mr. J., *Stockton-on-Tees*
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SANDYS, Colonel T. M., *Lancashire, S.W., Bootle*
  Benefices (No. 3) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 303
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SAUNDERSON, Colonel E. J., *Armagh, N.*
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  Bethnal Green, St. Jude's, *Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A* Sir J. Gorst *Jan* 25, 385
  Boards, Scotland, *Q.* Mr. J. Wilson (Falkirk); *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 2, 1044
  Buildings, *Q.* Mr. A. E. Hutton; *A.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 4, 1295
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  Erasmus Smith, Ireland, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Atkinson *Jan* 22, 276. *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. G. Balfour *Jan* 28, 673. *Qs.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. G. Balfour *Feb* 4, 1302
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    Report on, *Qs.* Mr. G. Drage, Mr. G. C. T. Bartley, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. H. Chaplin *Feb* 1, 902.

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  - *Equivalent Grants*
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    - *Scotch, Q.* Mr. Hedderwick; *A.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 4, 1312
- *Willesden, St. Andrew's, Qs.* Mr. J. H. Yoxall, Mr. A. J. Mundella; *As.* Sir J. Gorst *Feb* 2, 1043

Schwann, Mr. C. E., *Manchester, N.*
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- Midwives' Registration *Feb* 4, 1270
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Secretary for—Lord Balfour
Lord Advocate—Mr. A. Graham Murray
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- *Alien Pauper Lunatic, Q.* Sir M. Stewart; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 28, 685
- *Balintore Harbour, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
- *Congested Districts, Highlands and Islands, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 2, 1047
- *Crofter Commission, Q.* General Russell; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 4, 1305
- *Crofters Act 1886, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 2, 1049
- *Duty on Scotch Herrings, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Curzon *Feb* 2, 1039
- *Edinburgh University, Library Buildings, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Jan* 29, 796
- *Education Grant, Q.* Mr. E. Robertson; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 2, 1067
- *Elementary Schools, Highlands and Islands, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 2, 1048
- *Equivalent Grant, Qs.* Mr. W. Thorburn, Mr. J. Bryce; *As.* Sir M. Hicks Beach *Feb* 2, 1054

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- *Financial Relations, Great Britain and Ireland, Qs.* Mr. Munro Ferguson, Dr. G. B. Clark, Mr. T. Lough, Sir W. Harcourt: [Mr. Speaker;] *As* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 21, 198. *Q.* Dr. G. B. Clark; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 22, 293. *Qs.* Sir W. Dunn, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. J. J. Clancy, Dr. R. Ambrose; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Jan* 26, 513
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  - *Port Ness, Island of Lewis, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
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  - *Supply of Seamen, Glasgow, Q.* Mr. J. G. A. Baird; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1283
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  - *Port Ness Harbour, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
  - *Tiumpan Head Lighthouse, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1048
- *Jury Service, Yeomanry Officers, Q.* Mr. J. H. C Hozier; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 26 500
- *Local Government Board, Audit Department, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 22, 279
- *Necessitous Board Schools, Qs.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour *Feb* 5, 1435
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- *Oaths Act, Scottish Form, Q.* Mr. E. H. Pickersgill; *A.* Sir R. Webster *Feb* 2, 1065
- *Parish Councillors, Q.* Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Jan* 25, 396
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- *Peterhead Harbour, Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1272
- *Port Ness Harbour, Island of Lewis, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Graham Murray *Feb* 4, 1269
- *Post Office Amendment Act 1895, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Hanbury *Feb* 2, 1048
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c. Intro., Mr. R. B. Haldane; Read 1° *Feb* 8, 1639

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c. Intro., Mr. H. H. Marks; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 294

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Sharpe, Mr. W. E. T., *Kensington, N.*
  Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1497

Shaw, Mr. T., *Hawick Burghs*
  Succession (Scotland) Bill, Intro. *Feb* 3, 1240

Sheehy, Mr. D., *Galway, S.*
  Queen's Speech *Jan* 21, 251

Shipwrecks
  Warren Hastings, Indian Troopship, Qs. Colonel Lockwood, Mr. P. M. Thornton; *As.* Mr. Brodrick *Jan* 25, 383. *Q.* Mr. Vicary Gibbs; *A.* Mr. Brodrick *Feb* 1, 905

Shop Assistants (Half Holiday) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. H. V. Duncombe; Read 1° *Feb* 2, 1083

Shops Bill
c. Intro., Sir C. Dilke; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 304

Shops (Early Closing) Bill
c. Intro., Sir J. Lubbock; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 303

Simeon, Sir J. S. B., Bart., *Southampton*
  Netley Hospital Assessment *Feb* 2, 1054
  Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 3, 1219

Sinclair, Captain John, *Forfarshire*
  North Sea Convention *Feb* 8, 1539

Smaller Dwellings (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. A. Cross; Read 1° *Feb* 5, 1436

Smith, Mr. Abel H., *Christchurch*
  Boscombe Post Office *Feb* 4, 1293

Smith, Mr. Samuel, *Flintshire*
  Persecution of Nestorians *Feb* 4, 1278
  Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 80

Speaker, Mr.

The Right Hon.
WILLIAM COURT GULLY, Q.C.,
Carlisle

  Notices of Motion
    May I ask the hon. Members, when they bring up notices of motions in order to hand them in, to put on them the number they have obtained in the ballot? This will facilitate the labour of the clerks at the table *Jan* 21, 201
  Questions
    I should prefer not to answer a hypothetical question of that kind until I see what is really before the House *Jan* 22, 292
    That does not arise out of the question. The hon. Member proposes to ask a general question about the practice in England *Jan* 25, 402
    The Question which stands in the name of the hon. Member for Macclesfield is irregular and ought not to appear on the Paper, because it refers to a previous Debate in this House, and questions a statement there made. But as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in answering a question of the right hon. Member for Thanet, did give a kind of anticipatory answer to the question of the hon. Member for Macclesfield, and went with great detail into what has taken place with reference to that Debate, I think it only fair that the hon. Member should be allowed to put his Question or ask the right hon. Gentleman any further question *Feb* 2, 1061
    If a Minister refers to a particular document by quoting part of it, or stating what the effect of the contents of that particular document is, then the House is entitled to see the whole document. But I do not understand that any question of that kind arises here. A Minister is not bound, having stated, in answer to a question or otherwise, that there have been communications generally to such and such an effect with a foreign Government, to produce the document which would bear out his statement *Feb* 8, 1558
    There is a great difference between specifically referring to communications generally and specifically referring to the contents of a particular document. Nothing of the latter kind seems to have taken place here *Feb* 8, 1558

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SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate

I must remind the hon. Member that the question before the House is not the propriety of the conduct of the Home Secretary in releasing those who have been released, but as to whether those who are still prisoners should be released *Jan* 20, 131

I must remind the hon. Member that he must not discuss matters that might arise upon the Amendment given notice of by the hon. Member for Salford *Jan* 20, 134

The observations of the hon. Member are not pertinent to the Amendment before the House. The hon. Member is not entitled to discuss the general question of the mode of prosecuting criminals in Ireland or elsewhere *Jan* 20, 135

I have not hitherto interrupted the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the case of the four prisoners released, because a good many observations had been incidentally made about them. I hope, however, the right hon. Gentleman will not further argue their case upon an Amendment which does not really raise it *Jan* 20, 147

The whole of this discussion on the case of Bell is foreign to the question before the House. An hon. Member referred to the case of Bell, not for the purpose of arguing the merits of the case, but merely as an illustration. To that there was no objection, and, the matter having been referred to, the Home Secretary thought it right to give an explanation of what was stated by that hon. Member. The question of the prosecution of this man has really nothing to do with the question before the House *Jan* 20, 153

The hon. and learned Member is really going too far in entering upon these matters. They do not apply at all to the question of the Amendment *Jan* 21, 227

The hon. Member is a long way from the Amendment, which deals with the fall in the value of agricultural produce and the remedies proposed *Jan* 21, 239

The question of Irish taxation does not arise in the Amendment. It has been reserved for discussion on another day *Jan* 21, 246

The hon. Gentleman is now discussing the conduct of the Government with reference to the existing famine and plague in India. That is not raised in the Amendment. The Amendment only deals with the predisposing causes of the famine and plague *Jan* 26, 548

These personal questions are a long way from the Amendment before us *Jan* 26, 550

The policy of Lord Beaconsfield in the East is not raised on this Motion, and has nothing to do with the sending of a special envoy to the Turkish Government *Jan* 26, 584

It will be observed that Mr. Speaker Peel said there it was not a question of order. Moreover, he was speaking after the Second Reading of the Bill had been moved, and a Motion for the Adjournment had been made. It was only a question as to whether or not he ought to consider that Motion as an abuse of the Rules of the House. The time for raising such a point has not yet come *Jan* 27, 646

I cannot put that Motion, considering that the discussion has not lasted an hour, and that the Bill only came from the printers after the hour when the House met *Jan* 27, 658

I hope the hon. Gentleman will be able to conclude his speech without so many colloquies across the floor of the House *Jan* 28, 746

An Amendment of which notice must be given can only be moved by the hon. Member who put it down *Jan* 29, 823

The hon. Member is entitled to use the argument that he objects to this Vote because nothing has been said about an equivalent grant for Scotland, but he cannot go beyond that *Feb* 4, 1343

The hon. Member cannot enter upon the general question of the financial relations *Feb* 4, 1410

The hon. Gentleman has taken two objections. The first is as to the description of the Vote on the Paper. The Vote is, in fact, a Vote for the service of the year ending 31st March 1897, supplemental or additional to those Votes which have been already dealt with for that year, and that it is so sufficiently appears on the Paper. I think there is no doubt that if this, instead of being an additional Estimate, formed part of the original Estimates, it would appear upon the Civil Service Estimates. As regards the suggestion that it is a new matter altogether, and should be dealt with as a separate and original, and not supplemental, Vote, plenty of cases are to be found in which additional Estimates of this kind have been voted by the House upon notices, similar to this. In March 1895 there was a grant in aid for Cyprus—a matter upon which there had been no previous opportunity of discussion upon the Estimates. That was brought on in March as an additional Estimate just as this is brought on here. Therefore, as regards that part of the hon. Member's contention the matter is perfectly in order. As regards the other point, that there should be a Motion that I now leave the Chair, with opportunity for Debate before I leave the Chair, I think that objection also is groundless. The Standing Order 56, to which the hon. Member refers, expressly says that, "Whenever Committee of Supply stands as an Order of the Day on Monday or Thursday," or now, under the Sessional Order, on Friday, "Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without question put." To-day, Committee of Supply is an Order of the Day, and

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SPEAKER, Mr.—cont.

Rules and Order of Debate—cont.

therefore the Standing Order compels me to leave the Chair without question put. The invariable practice has been, that when the Motion has been carried "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," upon first going into the Estimates, any additional or supplementary Vote in Committee of Supply afterwards for a further expenditure in that year, is put to the Committee without the question being put that I leave the Chair. Therefore I think that the notice and procedure are quite in order, and I shall now leave the Chair without putting any question *Feb* 5, 1438

As some Members appear to object to my leaving the Chair, it is desirable that I should explain why it is not competent for them to do so. Standing Order No. 51 compels me to leave the Chair, on the Order for the Committee being read, unless there is a Notice of Instruction on the Paper. There are two Notices of Instruction on the Paper, but these being Instructions that are not valid I may—in accordance with previous and, if I may respectfully say so, correct ruling from the Chair—treat them as nullities and step out of the Chair at once. But the more usual and convenient course is that I should first make a statement as to the reasons why they are not valid Instructions. Therefore, I will say that the Instruction of the hon. Member for Caithness is out of order, in the first place because it is a mandatory injunction to a Committee of the Whole House, and, in the second place, because the subject-matter of it may be dealt with by way of Amendment. The Instruction of the hon. and gallant Member for Torquay is bad, so far as it relates to women's votes, because it may be made the subject of an Amendment; and in so far as it relates to taking away men's votes it is bad as being outside the scope of the Bill. Both Instructions are bad, and that being so, under the provisions of Standing Order No. 51, I am obliged to leave the Chair forthwith *Feb* 8, 1638

Miscellaneous Rulings

Jan 20, 131, 135, 172; *Jan* 21, 199, 226, 246; *Jan* 22, 290, 367; *Jan* 25, 379, 394, 395, 401, 430, 457, 488; *Jan* 26, 492, 505, 567, 596; *Jan* 27, 616, 619, 644; *Jan* 28, 681, 739; *Jan* 29, 823, 830; *Feb* 3, 1195, 1196, 1199, 1231; *Feb* 4, 1280, 1289, 1301, 1366, 1380, 1385, 1409, 1415; *Feb* 5, 1423; *Feb* 8, 1561, 1562, 1565, 1611, 1614

SPICER, Mr. A., *Monmouth Boroughs*
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 297
Voluntary Schools (Aid Grant) *Feb* 1, 988

STANHOPE, Hon. P. J., *Burnley*
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1510, 1512
Turkish Loans *Jan* 29, 799

STANLEY, LORD (Lord Commissioner of the Treasury), *Lancashire, S.E., Westhoughton*
House of Commons, Sale of Intoxicants *Feb* 5, 1434

STANLEY, Mr. H. M., *Lambeth, N.*
Supply: £798,802 for Egyptian Government *Feb* 5, 1487, 1488, 1489

Stationery Office (Parliamentary Printing)
Copies Pres. of Four Contracts (*c.*) *Feb* 1, 899

Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. Samuel; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 294

STEPHENS, Mr. H. C., *Middlesex, Hornsey*
Cemeteries Rating Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 296

STEVENSON, Mr. F. S., *Suffolk, Eye*
Political Prisoners, Turkey *Jan* 22, 275
Queen's Speech *Jan* 19, 101
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STEWART, Sir MARK J., Bart., *Kirkcudbrightshire*
Alien Pauper Lunatic, Scotland *Jan* 28, 685
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Public Health (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Feb* 5, 1525
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Teind Court (Scotland) Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 299

STONE, Sir J. B., Bart., *Birmingham, E.*
Unlawful Possession Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 302; 2R. *Jan* 26, 598; *Jan* 29, 877

Stoppages in the Streets
Order to Prevent, Renewed (*l.*) *Jan* 19, 36

STRACHEY, Mr. E., *Somerset, S.*
Queen's Speech, *Jan* 25, 457; *Jan* 26, 554
Rating of Machinery Bill, Intro. *Jan* 22, 297

Street Noises Bill
c. Intro., Mr. Radcliffe Cooke; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 297

Succession (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. T. Shaw; Read 1° *Feb* 3, 1240

SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Donegal, W.*
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Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill
c. Intro., Mr. J. H. Roberts; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 303
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c. Intro., Mr. J. J. Clancy; Read 1° *Jan* 25, 488

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
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TANNER, Dr. C. K. D., *Cork County, Mid*
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Teind Court (Scotland) Bill
c. Intro., Sir M. Stewart; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 299

Tenant Right in Towns (Ireland) Bill
c. Intro., Mr. W. Field; Read 1° *Jan* 27, 660

THOMAS, Mr. ALFRED, *Glamorgan, E.*
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THOMAS, Mr. DAVID A., *Merthyr Tydvil*
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THORBURN, Mr. W., *Peebles and Selkirk*
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THORNTON, Mr. PERCY M., *Clapham*
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Secretary—Earl of DUDLEY

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Merchandise Marks Act, Q. Sir A. K. Rollit; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 28, 677
Metric System, Q. Mr. A. J. Mundella; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1276
Metropolitan Railway, Ventilation, Q. Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 4, 1276
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Penrhyn's (Lord) Quarries, Qs. Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Bromley Davenport, Mr. Gibson Bowles; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Ritchie *Feb* 2, 1058
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  Connections, Ireland, Q. Sir T. G. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 381
  Fishguard Bay, Q. Mr. Rees Davies; *A.* Mr. Ritchie *Jan* 25, 389
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TREASURY

First Lord—Mr. A. J. Balfour
Patronage Secretary—Sir W. H. Walrond
Financial Secretary—Mr. R. W. Hanbury
Lords Commissioners—Mr. H.T. Anstruther; Mr. W. H. Fisher; Lord Stanley

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c. Intro., Mr. H. Broadhurst; Read 1º *Feb* 3, 1239

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  Prosecutions, Qs. Mr. J. W. Logan, Mr. T. Lough; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 21, 192
  Royal Commission Report, Qs. Mr. T. Bayley, Dr. Farquharson; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 26, 493. *Q.* Mr. J. W. Logan; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell *Jan* 28, 677

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c. Intro., Mr. P. M. Thornton; Read 1° *Jan* 22, 298

Vincent, Colonel Sir C. E. Howard, *Sheffield, Central*
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